

Iraq agrees to activate U.N. cameras

UNITED NATIONS (R) — Iraq has agreed to activate U.N. surveillance cameras at two missile sites, thereby clearing the way for a resumption of crucial arms talks. Iraq's ambassador, Nizar Hamdoun, told reporters that Iraq had told the U.N. Special Commission, in charge of dismantling Baghdad's dangerous weapons, that the cameras could be activated at any time. Mr. Hamdoun said his government had "agreed to activate the cameras as a sign of good will." He said they could be turned on any time the Special Commission wanted. There was no immediate response from members of the commission but diplomatic sources confirmed that Iraq had consented to the use of the monitoring cameras at two missile bases near Baghdad. Rolf Ekens, chairman of the commission, had linked the activation of the cameras to continuing arms talks with Iraq in Baghdad in October. The two sides completed a week of intensive talks in New York earlier this month that could eventually lead to lifting the oil embargo imposed on Iraq three years ago after its troops invaded Kuwait. The cameras had been installed but Iraq had refused to activate them, drawing a stern warning from the Security Council.

Sweden says no concessions to Iraq

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt said Friday Stockholm had made no promises to Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to obtain the release of three Swedish engineers jailed in Baghdad a year ago. He was speaking at a press conference after the arrival back home of Leif Westberg, 54, Christer Sjöström, 44, and Stefan Wihlborg, 33, who were freed Wednesday after serving one year of seven-year sentences imposed for entering Iraq illegally. The three, employed by Swedish telecommunications giant Ericsson, were arrested after straying across the border from Kuwait. Mr. Bildt said the release of the three had come after strenuous diplomatic efforts. For the first six months of this year there had been no positive reaction from Baghdad. An agreement to negotiate was reached at a meeting with United Nations Secretary General Boutros Ghali and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz. Mr. Bildt said that on Aug. 24 he had summoned the Iraqi charge d'affaires in Stockholm, Abdul Razzak Salih, and urged that the three should be pardoned. On Wednesday a personal letter from King Carl XVI Gustaf was handed to President Saddam Hussein by an official of the Swedish court, which asked nothing more than the release of the engineers, Mr. Bildt said.

Artillery duels in South Lebanon

MARJAYOUN (AP) — Israel and its militia ally duelled with guerrillas using mortars and howitzers in South Lebanon Friday. Security sources said at least one Israeli-affiliated militiaman was wounded. The sources said gunners of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah provoked the clash by hammering an outpost manned by Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) militiamen with mortar rounds at 2:30 p.m. (1430 GMT). They said the outpost at Shoumarieh, on the northern edge of Israel's self-proclaimed "security zone," was targeted by at least 27 mortar rounds in an hour. SLA and Israeli gunners responded by shelling bases of Hizbollah in hills near four villages.

PLO holds aid talks with EC

BRUSSELS (AFP) — Officials of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the European Community (EC) met here Friday to discuss European aid projects in the occupied territories, an EC spokesman said. The talks focused on projects in Gaza and Jericho, which are the first Palestinian areas to be given autonomy under a peace accord between the PLO and Israel signed in Washington Sept. 13. An Israeli delegation had visited European Commission headquarters here on Thursday for the same reason, but there was no joint presentation, EC officials said (see related story on page 10).

PLO sees all envoys except Kuwaiti

TUNIS (R) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) representative in Tunisia met with the ambassadors of five of the six Gulf Cooperation Council states Thursday to discuss financial support for the PLO-Israel peace accord. Kuwait's ambassador did not attend the meeting. A PLO statement said PLO Representative Hakam Balawi met the ambassadors of Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to discuss financial backing for the Palestinian self-rule deal. Kuwait's ambassador was not immediately available for comment but his office and his family said he was in Tunis.

4 executed in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (AP) — Four men were beheaded Friday in various parts of Saudi Arabia, two of them Asians convicted of smuggling heroin into the kingdom. The Interior Ministry said Abdullah Mir Ullah Khan, of Afghanistan, and Asghar Ali Zakheel, a Pakistani, were beheaded in Riyadh for drug smuggling. Abdullah Ben Mubarak Al Bishi was beheaded in Jeddah for kidnapping two eight-year-old girls, stabbing and raping them. The announcement did not say whether the girls were killed. Hassan Ben Mohammad Al Zabhi was beheaded in Qunfud, in Mecca province, for crushing his father to death with his car, the ministry said.

Abiola returns home

LAGOS (AP) — Nigeria's would-be president ended his seven-week absence Friday and returned to a hero's welcome from at least 100,000 supporters anxious for him to govern their country. Publishing magnate Moshood K.O. Abiola, criticised by some supporters for staying away from the troubled nation since Aug. 3, arrived at Lagos airport where at least 100,000 cheering people rushed to surround the jetliner carrying him. "M.K.O. is our man" the crowds chanted as they swept past hundreds of police, waving placards saying "we want M.K.O. for president." Mr. Abiola was ahead in the 12 presidential ballot when military ruler Ibrahim Babangida ordered the counting stopped and declared the results void.

Rabin wants autonomy talks to be held in Jordan

Israel-Syria declaration drafted but differences remain

Combined agency dispatches

TEL AVIV — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said in an interview published Friday that he wants negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on the implementation of the Palestinian autonomy accord to take place in Jordan. "I hope the negotiations will not take place in Washington," he told Yediot Aharonot newspaper. "It would be better if they could take place in this region. Perhaps in Rhodes (Greece), Al Arish or Taba (both in Egypt). I would prefer it if they took place in Jordan, if the Jordanians let us into their country."

Jordan and Israel, still technically in a state of war, signed an agenda for peace on Sept. 14, a day after Israel and the PLO concluded their historic peace deal in Washington. Mr. Rabin said the Israeli army would negotiate with the PLO on the withdrawal of Israeli forces from the Gaza Strip and Jericho. "For me, Gaza should be a pilot project, an experimental centre," he said.

He said international investment in the strip was essential and desirable from the Israeli side also, because if the project failed, it would play into the hands of the Islamic fundamentalists who seek the destruction of Israel.

Mr. Rabin said there had been no date set for PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's return to the occupied territories.

"Nothing that Arafat has said so far clashes with the agreement. The only point on which he has deviated is on his return to the territories. There has been no decision made on his return date," he said.

Mr. Arafat said Thursday that he would begin planning his return to the occupied territories on Dec. 1.

Mr. Rabin, having won parliamentary approval for his peace pact with the PLO, has said his next task was building ties with the Arab World.

The Knesset approved on Thursday by a vote of 61 to 50, with eight abstentions and one member absent, Israel's recognition of the PLO and the accord signed last week (see page 10).

"The Arab World always said the Palestinian problem was at the heart of the conflict," Mr. Rabin said after the vote. "The fact we have started to tackle it and together solve it must have implications for our relations with the Arab World."

Mr. Rabin also said in remarks published on Friday that Israel and Syria have drafted a declaration of principles for an accord but cannot agree on crucial land-for-peace clauses.

Israel has demanded Syria

commit to "full peace," meaning open borders, free trade and diplomatic relations, while Syria has insisted on a complete Israeli withdrawal from the strategic Golan Heights.

"There is a draft declaration of principles but it still has not passed the problematic clause of depth of withdrawal and the clause about the essence of peace," Mr. Rabin said in an interview with the Israeli daily Maariv.

He repeated accusations that Syria's commitment to peace was questionable, saying it supports anti-Israel guerrillas in Lebanon and gives refuge in Damascus to groups opposed to the Israeli-PLO agreement. "We still don't have the answer if Syria wants peace," he said. But he added that American and Egyptian officials told him there was a shift in Syria's position on defining peace.

"They tell me there has been a change among them with regard to the essence of full peace."

In Washington, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said he had good news to share with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher on the Israeli-Syrian talks.

"Asked whether he had any 'good news to impart' to Mr. Christopher following Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's meeting with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, Mr. Musa said with a smile, "I

certainly have," but declined to elaborate.

"We do hope that very soon there will be some progress on the Syrian-Israeli track," Mr. Musa said at a picture-taking session before his meeting with Mr. Christopher.

"I'm sure that with the American role and with the help given by all the parties concerned there will be progress, we do hope that very shortly," Mr. Musa said.

After the 45-minute meeting, State Department spokesman Michael McCurry said Mr. Christopher and Mr. Musa discussed Mr. Mubarak's talks on Wednesday with Mr. Assad.

"These discussions confirmed Syria's commitment to moving ahead with the peace process and to working closely with the United States," Mr. McCurry said in a statement.

Mr. Mubarak, in an interview published Wednesday, said Israel could stage a four-month withdrawal from the Golan Heights under a deal being discussed with Syria.

U.S. Middle East peace coordinator Dennis Ross said Thursday he hoped for a breakthrough soon in negotiations between Syria and Israel, but there were still deep divisions between the two sides (see page 2).

In a third interview published Friday with the mass

(Continued on page 5)



Heavily armed troops sit in their military lorries as they wait on the Moscow Ring Road close to the Russian Parliament building Friday. Hundreds of troops are moved across the city towards the White House after President Boris Yeltsin ordered the people standing outside the parliament to disarm themselves (AFP photo)

Police squeeze anti-Yeltsin camp as crisis continues

Combined agency dispatches

MOSCOW — Police in steel helmets and falk jackets squeezed the barricaded parliament building Friday, trying to choke off support for hard-line lawmakers who defied President Boris Yeltsin for a fourth day. Mr. Yeltsin ordered his security forces to disarm opponents outside the Russian White House and told them to shoot to kill if threatened. He also expressed hope for a peaceful end to the crisis. Police hunted for gunmen who attacked a military headquarters in the first violent clash since Mr. Yeltsin Tuesday disbanded parliament to break Russia's crippling political deadlock.

About 2,000 anti-Yeltsin protesters held their ground peacefully at the White House throughout the chilly, rainy day. The crowd was tense but orderly as people huddled under umbrellas, listened to speeches and warned themselves at small bonfires, next to signs labelling Mr. Yeltsin "Judas" and "a new Hitler."

A group of about 30 men and women carrying religious icons and singing hymns marched around the parliament building, led by a Russian Orthodox priest in black robes, urging police not to move against the demonstrators.

Hundreds of police, some wearing riot gear, ringed the grounds of the parliament building late Friday in the first major show of force by the government. Police allowed people to leave the area but blocked anyone trying to enter in an apparent effort to bring the protest to an end.

Lawmakers inside the building earlier distributed dozens of automatic weapons to their supporters outside, but there were no guns in sight late Friday.

A presidential decree instructed army and police to "take measures to take away weapons from the persons" holding parliament and to take control of security at the building.

"There is a real danger of firearms being used in Moscow," Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov told reporters. The Russian Congress of People's Deputies, by-passing Mr. Yeltsin, Friday voted to hold early legislative and presidential elections on the same day "by the end of March."

Mr. Yeltsin has fixed general elections for Dec. 11-12 and presidential elections for Russia's independence day on June 12 next year.

The 1,068-seat congress, or full parliament, suspended its session for several hours Friday to enable its members to seek popular support for their

power struggle with Mr. Yeltsin.

Deputies tasked the two-chamber Supreme Soviet, Russia's working parliament, to prepare the polls and said electoral commissions appointed by other officials, meaning Mr. Yeltsin's government, were illegal.

General Alexander Rutskoi, who was named president by parliament earlier this week, said Thursday he wanted simultaneous elections early next year but "not before Feb. 23" so as to have enough time to prepare them.

Mr. Yeltsin has said he was opposed to simultaneous elections as they would have a power vacuum.

Twenty-six local Soviets (councils) have voiced support for the communist and conservative-dominated parliament, meanwhile called for presidential and legislative elections on Dec. 12.

Council leaders, in a statement read to congress by Deputy Amalgam Tulev, chairman of the regional Soviet of Kemerovo, western Siberia, urged parliament and the government to agree to the date by Tuesday.

They said that they would "call strikes, local referendums, stop paying taxes, exporting oil and gas and block

(Continued on page 3)

Officials say no shift in stand on citizenship

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordanian citizens of Palestinian origin will continue to enjoy full citizenship rights and can freely decide whether they want to stay in the country or go back to the West Bank and become Palestinian citizens, government officials said Friday.

"If they decide to return to the West Bank and regain their nationality, that is their choice," Reuters quoted Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali as saying Friday.

Minister of Information Ma'an Abu Nowar said that the citizenship of all Jordanians is protected by the law and cannot be revoked.

"The Jordanian nationality cannot be revoked as it is protected by the Constitution, the law and the King," Dr. Abu Nowar told the Jordan Times.

But if Jordanians of Palestinian origin decide to regain their Palestinian nationality in the future, they will have to abandon their Jordanian citizenship in accordance with the law which stipulates that no citizen is to hold another Arab citizenship. Dual citizenship is allowed only with a non-Arab country.

"No Arab should hold two nationalities in Arab countries," Reuters quoted Dr. Majali as saying.

Reuters had earlier quoted Dr. Abu Nowar as saying that Jordanians who choose to vote in the West Bank elections would not be allowed to maintain their nationalities, but Dr. Abu Nowar later denied having said this, stressing that the nationality of all citizens is protected by the Constitution and His Majesty the King.

However, other officials have said that Jordanians will not be allowed to vote in elections both in the West Bank and Jordan.

Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Jawad Al Anani was Wednesday quoted as saying that the Palestine Liberation Organisation

(PLO) and Jordan had agreed in principle that there should not be a "duplication" in voting. He said the modalities of how this will be done are to be worked out by joint Jordanian-Palestinian committees.

Officials say that the decision not to allow a duplication in the voting process was prompted by the large number of voters who might be able to vote in elections in both the West Bank and Jordan, thus strongly influence the outcome of the polls.

Reuters quoted Dr. Majali as saying that Jordan did not have a policy of revoking citizenship if Jordanians of Palestinian origin voted in the West Bank elections.

Dr. Abu Nowar said the elections in the West Bank and Jordan were not discussed during meetings between Jordanian and Palestinian officials in Amman last week.

He said the issue was "mentioned in passing" but added that there was "no discussion of it" in the sense that no conclusions were reached.

Under the PLO-Israel self-rule agreement signed in Washington on Sept. 13, elections for a Palestinian council are to be held in July 1994. The agreement says that Palestinian refugees outside the occupied territories cannot take part in the polls for "practical reasons."

Parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place on Nov. 8 but Jordan is reexamining its plans to hold the elections on the scheduled date in light of the PLO-Israel agreement.

Both Dr. Majali and Dr. Abu Nowar said the government was still preparing to hold the elections on Nov. 8.

Dr. Majali told Reuters that the right of return of Palestinians and other issues which touched on Jordan were still unclear.

According to Dr. Anani, the number of displaced Palestinians — those who fled the West Bank in 1967 and their

Israeli killed; PLO orders end to attacks

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — An Israeli man was found stabbed to death by Palestinians near Tel Aviv Friday in the first fatal attack on an Israeli since the signing of the Israel-Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement last week, police said.

Yigal Waknin, 21, was apparently killed by Islamic fundamentalists Wednesday while driving a tractor in an orchard near Batna, north of Tel Aviv, a police spokesman said.

A leaflet signed by the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), an opponent of the Israel-PLO autonomy accord, was found near the body claiming responsibility for the killing, he said.

Hamas has strongly denounced the autonomy agreement signed in Washington and pledged to continue attacks on Israelis.

A top PLO guerrilla in the Gaza Strip told AFP meanwhile that PLO fighters have received orders from PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat to halt all operations against the Israeli occupation.

"We respect the decision of President Arafat to stop firing," Hisham Juda, the Gaza Strip leader of Fatah Hawks, said.

"Since the autonomy agreement was signed on Sept. 13 we have not carried out any operations against the Israelis," said the 28-year-old, one of the most wanted Palestinian fighters.

"We can protect ourselves but are under orders not to open fire first," he said during the interview at a secret location in Rafah, on the border with Egypt.

The Hawks have killed only the Palestinian "collaborator" since the accord, which comes into effect in Gaza and Jericho on Oct. 13 was sealed, and that was decided on beforehand, he said.

"We stopped operations against the army so I've stopped everything against our own people as well," said Mr. Juda, who commands 50 armed guer-

illas spread across the strip in underground cells. Israel's military Chief of Staff General Ehud Barak said the PLO leadership had issued instructions to activists in the occupied territories to reduce the level of violence.

"It is in the PLO's interest to cut down violence and terrorism in Israel and perhaps even in Lebanon," Mr. Barak told Friday's Maariv newspaper. "The PLO leadership has given instructions to that end to activists in the field."

He backed the setting up of a Palestinian police force to maintain order during the autonomous period and said the expected the major problem for Israel to be ensuring security on the roads in the occupied territories.

Meanwhile, roadblocks went up and troops and police were on heightened alert as Israel sealed off the occupied territories Friday for the Yom Kippur (day of atonement) holiday, military and police sources said.

The West Bank and Gaza Strip, which Palestinians have only been able to leave with a special permit since last March, would be closed from 2:00 a.m. Friday until 2:00 a.m. Sunday.

Roads leading into Israel from the occupied territories were closed, even to the tens of thousands of Palestinians with the permits allowing them to work in Israel, the military sources said.

Police said patrols had been stepped up outside public buildings and markets to prevent possible attacks.

The occupied territories are closed off every year on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar.

Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani Friday reiterated Iran's opposition to the PLO-Israel agreement, but warned Palestinians against taking up arms against each other.

"I warn you Palestinians, there are signs that the U.S.

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Mandela urges end to sanctions; world responds

Combined agency dispatches

WASHINGTON — The United States will move immediately to answer Nelson Mandela's call to dismantle sanctions against South Africa, a senior administration official said Friday.

President Bill Clinton's administration welcomed Mr. Mandela's speech to the United Nations and said it would begin steps Friday to remove most remaining U.S. sanctions, said the official.

The White House was expected to issue a statement urging all states and local entities to end sanctions against South Africa.

In addition, it will support lifting remaining federal sanctions against South Africa with the exception of an embargo on nuclear technologies and arms to the country, the official said.

That restriction probably will not be lifted "until a democratically elected government is in place," the official said. Most of the sanctions ordered by the U.S. Congress in 1987 were lifted by President George Bush's administration in 1991. But the remaining sanctions have continued to drain the economy, particularly a ban on assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), officials said.

Officials said Mr. Clinton would instruct Secretary of

State Warren Christopher to make it clear that South Africa no longer should be barred from receiving IMF assistance under a 1985 law that barred IMF funding as long as the country's government practiced apartheid.

The Clinton administration also plans to support new efforts to support the democratic process in South Africa, including new steps to encourage U.S. companies to invest there and a study of possible Peace Corps involvement there.

Mr. Clinton also planned to call on churches, universities, labor groups and other private organizations to "get back into South Africa" after avoiding any support for the country for years, the official said.

Mr. Mandela, president of the African National Congress (ANC) told the U.N.:

"The time has come when the international community should lift all economic sanctions against South Africa." He was addressing a speech to the special U.N. commission on apartheid.

Lifting economic sanctions would come "in response to the historic advances towards democracy that have been achieved... and give added impetus to this process," said the ANC chief.

The South African parliament to approved plans to create a transitional executive



Nelson Mandela

council to establish multi-party councils that would oversee the government in advance of South Africa's first non-racial election on April 27.

But Mr. Mandela asked the United Nations to maintain an embargo on weapons sales until that new government is elected. The arms embargo was imposed in 1977 and can only be removed by the U.N. Security Council.

Mr. Mandela also urged nations to restore diplomatic relations with South Africa.

"We would like to urge that the mandatory sanctions be maintained until the new government has been formed. We would leave the issue of the oil embargo to the discretion of the committee of the general assembly responsible for the enforcement of this particular

(Continued on page 5)

U.S. sees role for Iran in peace process but rules out any involvement of Iraq

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The United States has signalled that it would welcome Iranian involvement in the Middle East peace process if Tehran chooses to do so, but that Iraqi involvement could be ruled out at this point in time.

Dennis Ross, Washington's special coordinator for the Middle East, also told a satellite press conference with journalists in four major European capitals monitored in Amman Thursday that the U.S. was actively engaged in efforts to close the gap between Israeli and Syrian positions in the 23-month-old Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Asked whether the U.S. opposed the establishment of an independent state and favoured a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, Mr. Ross restated the American position that it would not support the creation of an independent entity in the Israeli occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"If you look at the (Israeli-occupied) territories that those who favoured such a position have had in mind for a state, we have been concerned that it might end up destabilising both Israel and Jordan."

"But the fact of the matter is that we have also said that from our standpoint it's up to the parties to determine what they are prepared to agree

to," he said in reply to the question, which came from a journalist in Madrid.

Mr. Ross sidestepped a question from Paris on the impact of the Sept. 13 agreement between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Jordan's Nov. 8 general elections.

"A comprehensive solution is something that is in Jordan's interest," he said. "Jordan has concluded its agenda agreement with Israel now, which is also another milestone. And so I think that Jordan, which has always been very committed to peace, will find that a process of peace, and the prospect of developing it, will be something that is beneficial within Jordan itself."

Mr. Ross, a holdover from the Bush administration and considered Washington's best diplomatic expert on the Arab-Israeli conflict, was asked how the U.S. viewed Iran's opposition to the peace process.

"I think Iran has to decide if it wants to be a normal part of the region, if it wants to see a region that can move ahead and develop economically, if it wants to see a region that has a very different future for all of its people," Mr. Ross said. "Iran can be a part of that if they support the process. I don't know why it should be in Iran's interest not to support peace in the region."

"Ultimately Iran can play an important role if it's prepared to support peace and

tranquility... (otherwise) it will be isolated."

At another point during the press conference, monitored at the American Centre at the U.S. Embassy here, Mr. Ross was asked whether the U.S. would try to "re-empower" Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Mr. Ross replied: "You cannot re-empower someone like Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein's purposes have not changed. At this point the region is fortunate that he remains basically a prisoner within his own country. He cannot be a source for stability in any way shape or form."

A good part of the press conference dealt with the Israeli-Syrian negotiations and international aid to support Palestinian self-rule in the occupied territories.

Mr. Ross made the following points: — Both Syria and Israel are committed to a negotiated settlement, as reflected in statements by the leaders of the two countries, including the comments Syrian President Hafez Al Assad made in Alexandria after talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak on Wednesday, but there are "some complex issues...hard problems" that remain to be addressed.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher is actively engaged in trying to bridge the differences in direct contacts with the parties and might

even visit the Middle East to help the process. No date has been fixed.

The U.S. is prepared to provide the kind of guarantees that the Syrians and Israelis want, possibly including the stationing of American forces in the Golan Heights. "But...I think we are a little ahead of them. We're not at that point yet."

Mr. Ross declined to be specific whether the U.S. believed that an eventual total Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights was essential for peace.

"That's for the parties to work out," he said. "They have to come to grips with each other's requirements..."

Washington hopes that Syria would not support the Damascus-based Palestinian groups which oppose the Israel-PLO accord. "We have emphasised to the Syrians the importance of supporting this agreement. They have told us they will not oppose it...obviously there are Palestinian groups that are in Syria that are expressing positions of opposition. We would certainly hope that those groups don't receive support...anyone who is placing impediments in the way of this agreement...is not contributing to an objective of achieving a comprehensive solution."

Washington hopes that Lebanon, which has criticised the Israel-PLO accord, will change its position. "...One

has to see this agreement as a very critical, important building block...It is important to demonstrate that this agreement can work, because that's going to build confidence on all sides and it's going to make progress towards a comprehensive solution that much more likely."

In the context of the hardline Lebanese groups, including Hizbollah, which oppose the accord, the U.S. "is doing everything (it) can to isolate and discredit those who oppose the movement towards peace." (The question was whether the U.S. was pressuring Syria to disarm Hizbollah).

Washington supports the 1989 Taif accord, which led to the end of the civil war in Lebanon, and believes that all foreign forces in Lebanon should withdraw, leaving the Lebanese government to exercise its authority and sovereignty all over Lebanon.

The U.S. will not define how much territories the Palestinians should have. "It is a final status issue; it is not related to the agreement that has just been worked out."

Washington will closely coordinate with all other donors to the Palestinians during an Oct. 1 conference in Washington.

While figures cited by various organisations on the needs of rebuilding the West Bank and Gaza Strip vary, Washington tends to accept the World Bank's figure of \$3 billion in 10 years. "But we

are talking to our partners about the needs, and also talking to the Palestinians as well, as we assess the needs."

The \$250 million pledged by the U.S. will be spread over two years.

The European Community has a leading role to play to support the Palestinian economy, particularly that the bloc is the chairman of the Middle East multilateral working group of regional economic cooperation. "We expect they have major contributions to make in a material, in a political, and in a moral sense."

Washington sees three distinct levels of assistance to the Palestinians: Emergency aid, short-term help to build infrastructure, and long-term foundations for economic development. While the first and second levels could materialise soon, such as a job creation, roads, housing and services infrastructure, the longer-term plans will take more time to be put in place.

An end to the arms race in the Middle East has to be seen in the framework of multilateral and regional reconciliation and economic, social and political cooperation. "One of the prime objectives that we have to have in this process is to transform the region from one of great volatility, where there is an overabundance of arms, into a region where there is great...cooperation."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Cancer victims take Israeli plant to court

TEL AVIV (R) — Workers at Israel's top-secret Dimona nuclear reactor have gone to court demanding to know if they were exposed to dangerous substances which might have caused their cancer. Reuven Laster, lawyer for four workers and the families of two others who have died, said that officials had for more than a year failed to meet his requests for levels of exposure to chemicals and radiation required by law. "They don't give a reason. They simply say they're working on it," Mr. Laster told Reuters. "So I went to court asking the court to appoint an inspector to go over the file." Israel never comments on whether it has nuclear weapons except to say it will not be the first to introduce them to the Middle East. Foreign news reports suggest it has a 200 nuclear warheads.

Rushdie calls on Clinton to pressure Iran

NEW YORK (AP) — Salman Rushdie says it is time for the United States to join other Western governments in pressuring Iran to lift the death sentence that has forced the author to hide. "We need for the American administration to get into that coalition and lead it with the threat of economic and political sanctions," Mr. Rushdie told reporters by telephone Thursday. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini issued the death sentence against the Indian-born English writer in 1989, accusing him of blaspheming Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses." An organisation of booksellers is distributing a petition Sunday asking President Bill Clinton to meet with Mr. Rushdie, to denounce the death sentence to "explore all avenues towards persuading the Iranian leadership to rescind the threat." Copies of the petition were sent to at least 5,000 bookstores for customers to sign.

Turkish minister urges fight against corruption

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's justice minister urged prosecutors Thursday to prosecute corruption cases "fearlessly" and promised to protect them against powerful interest groups. "You (prosecutors) needn't wait for orders. Have such incidents according to the dictates of law and your conscience," Seyfi Oktay was quoted by Anatolia news agency as saying at a news conference. "You must carry out the procedures fearlessly and unhesitatingly against anyone involved in corruption." A public outcry has been raised against widespread corruption since August when the parliament passed an alleged case of massive embezzlement involving the Social Democrat Populist Party (SHP), a partner in coalition government. Ergun Goknel, Waterworks (IS) chief of Istanbul's Social Democrat-controlled municipality, is in jail awaiting trial on corruption charges. Prosecutors have questioned SHP's Istanbul chief on possible links with Goknel involving millions of dollars worth of suspected "donations" to his party from contractors hired by ISKI. "As we've your assurances under law, I, as minister, will be your guarantor... your bulwark against politically or socially powerful groups," Mr. Oktay told the news conference.

British diplomats to visit prisoners in Iraq

AMMAN (R) — Two British diplomats will travel to Iraq Sunday to visit British prisoners held in the country, according to the British embassy in Amman said. "It is a routine consular visit," an embassy official said, adding that it was part of a series of regular visits to the prisoners in Iraq. The visit expected to last about five days, was arranged before the freed three Swedes held on the same charges on Wednesday. The official said the Amman-based diplomats, Consul Colin Cooper and Arabic-speaking political officer Mark Le Goy, would visit Paul Wainwright, Simon Dunn, and Paul Ride, who were held in Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad. They would not have political talks with Iraqi officials. Mr. Ride's wife Julie visited him at the jail this week. The mission is the second since Mr. Le Goy and Stephen Howarth, head of the Foreign Office consular department, visited the three Britons in July and reported they were in good health. Mr. Howarth was the highest-ranking British official to visit Iraq since the 1991 Gulf war.

Kuwait asks Libya to recall envoy

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — The Kuwaiti government has told Libya to recall its ambassador to the emirate and name another envoy, Arab diplomatic sources here said Friday. The decision to declare the Libyan ambassador here, Hosni Salah Al Mudir, persona non grata came after he was involved in an argument with the Saudi ambassador to Kuwait, Trad Al Harthi, during a reception, the sources said. They said the two exchanged harsh words during a celebration of Libya's national day at the Libyan embassy here Wednesday.

Opposition says Iraq executes hundreds

LONDON (R) — An exiled Iraqi opposition group said Thursday that Iraq had executed hundreds of prisoners to quell a rebellion against the government. The Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said in a statement the bodies of scores of victims had been returned to their families, many with signs of torture. There was an independent confirmation of the allegations. The exile opposition group, which has an office in London, said it had confirmation of reports that a wave of executions was ordered after a revolt at the end of August. "SCIRI sources said that more than 4,000 prisoners and detainees, mostly from southern and central Iraq, have been sentenced to death Thursday's statement said."

Kurdish-related violence claims 37 lives

ANKARA (R) — Thirty-seven people have been killed in the latest Kurdish-related violence in southeastern Turkey, security officials said Thursday. A statement from the region's emergency rule governor's office said 24 guerrillas of the separatist Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK) were killed in five separate overnight clashes in Hakkari, Sirnak, Mardin and Bingol provinces.

Ex-prisoners flock to become policemen

By Sami Aboudi
Reuters

RAMALLAH, Occupied West Bank — Young Palestinian men, including many who have been in Israeli jails, flooded Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) offices throughout the West Bank and Gaza Strip Thursday to become policemen under Palestinian authority.

"I always wanted to be a policeman. I did not want to serve under the Israeli police, but it is my dream to be a Palestinian policeman," said Yousef Omar, 23, one of several dozen young men who packed the PLO Fatah offices in Ramallah.

Maher Yasser, 24, of the West Bank village of Shuqba, who has been barred by the Israeli secret police from entering Israel to work, said he was eager to "serve my people as a policeman."

Under an Israeli-Palestinian agreement on self-rule in the occupied territories, the PLO has begun recruiting people aged 18-35 for its police force. "After the accord was signed, President Yasser Arafat gave instructions to start registering people for the police force," said Hussein Al Shaikh, a senior leader of Mr. Arafat's mainstream Fatah wing in Ramallah.

He said a PLO committee in Tunis was overseeing the sign-up in both the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Israeli troops were nowhere in sight of the Ramallah centre, 16 kilometres north of Jerusalem.

Thousands of Palestinians, mostly Fatah activists who had been jailed for resisting Israeli

occupation, packed some 28 offices set up by the PLO throughout the occupied territories.

The Palestinian force, to be known officially as the Palestinian National Security Forces, are to include Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) soldiers now dispersed in several Arab countries as well as local recruits.

Senior Palestinian leader Faisal Al Hussein said the PLO wants a force of up to 30,000 men and women.

Officials in charge of the conscription said the PLO intended to enlist up to 12,000 policemen, 7,000 for the West Bank and 5,000 for the Gaza Strip.

Hassan Mustafa Sharaqa, 28, an official at the Ramallah recruitment centre, said more than 40 people applied in the first hour the offices were open. He said many had been jailed in the past for resisting Israeli occupation.

"They feel they have fought for their homeland and now they feel it is their duty to protect what they had achieved," said Mr. Sharaqa.

Some former policemen who served in the occupied territories under Israeli command also applied.

Adel Masarweh, 47, was an officer when the police were under Israeli command but resigned five years ago on appeals from leaders of the uprising against Israeli rule.

"He said the Ramallah district alone would need more than 500 policemen for the 99 villages and towns in the district."

"We were understaffed and very thinly stretched. Now we need to set up a strong police force," he said.



DAY OF JUDGEMENT: An ultra orthodox Jew, watched by children, blows in a shofar in front of the western wall in occupied Jerusalem for the Yom Kippur holiday. For observant Jews, Yom Kippur means complete abstinence from food, drink, sex and work to devote the time to prayer and confession of sins. According to the Jewish faith, it is the day God judges every individual (AFP photo)

Egypt police may have tortured man to death

CAIRO (R) — An Egyptian human rights group has said a man arrested on suspicion of involvement in a bomb attack on the interior minister had died during police questioning, possibly because of torture, and demanded an investigation.

The Egyptian Organisation for Human Rights (EOHR) said in a statement on Thursday that Ahmad Farouk Ahmad Ali died a day after being arrested on Sept. 2, two weeks after a bomb nearly killed Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali.

EOHR said a police officer told the man's father on Sept. 4 that his son "died of a heart attack during investigation." It added that this was the fourth suspected torture death since early May.

"The official death notification issued by the directorate of health affairs noted that

"the body has several bruises on the face, and the death occurred as a result of failure in heart and respiratory functions" and added that "specimens were taken for examination and the case is under investigation" EOHR said.

The court said it had presented the prosecutor general with a statement demanding that the death should be investigated, and the body of the victim given protection because of "the continuous threats they are being subjected to by the security apparatus."

EOHR said police detained the father and 13 other family members on Aug. 20 to force the son to give himself up. The father was taken to a headquarters of state security investigations, the main domestic intelligence agency, "where he was subjected to severe beating on all parts of

his body while being tied by his feet and hands, and also the officers threatened to sexually assault him, his wife, sisters and daughter in law," EOHR said.

After being told of the son's death and released, "the father was ordered to commit to silence and to endorse a statement that his son died naturally."

EOHR said it "reiterates what it severely stated that torture for political reasons has practically become a condoned crime."

It added: "Not a single perpetrator of torture in political cases has been brought to court since more than seven years."

"This certainly leads those responsible for torture to feel immune from punishment, which contributes to the prevalence of torture and the increase in the number of deaths suspected to have occurred because of torture."

Egypt hopes for breakthrough of Lockerbie

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said in a newspaper interview published Thursday that he hoped there would be a breakthrough in the next few days in Libya's dispute with the West over the Lockerbie bombing.

The United States and Britain have warned that the United Nations will impose new sanctions on Libya if it does not hand over for trial by Oct. 1 two men accused of blowing up a Pan Am airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988. Hope of an opening in the next couple of days.

Asked if he meant that the suspects would be tried in Scotland, Mr. Mubarak said: "There will not be a surrender but the two might volunteer to travel abroad to establish their innocence."

He added: "If I was in Libya's place, I would not be able to surrender the suspects. But the great powers are insisting, and so the solution is for the two suspects to volunteer to travel and be tried to establish their innocence."

A Foreign Ministry source later reported that Mubarak had sent his senior political adviser, Osama Al Baz, to Libya with a message for Libyan leader Muammar Al Qadhafi dealing in part with Egypt's efforts to prevent the dispute worsening.

The U.N. imposed an air embargo on Libya in April 1992 in support of the Western demands and is likely to add a ban on selling oil industry equipment to Libya and a freeze on some of Libya's assets abroad if Libya fails to meet the Oct. 1 deadline.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 77311-19
PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 — Les Aventures de l'Espace
18:30 — Envoyé Spécial
19:00 — News in French
19:15 — Fenêtre Sur
19:30 — News in Hebrew
20:00 — News in Arabic
20:30 — It's a Wacky World
21:00 — Perspective
21:30 — Varieties
22:00 — News in English
22:30 — Feature Film "Hillside Stranglers"

PRAYER TIMES

06:04 — Fair
06:12 — (Sunrise) Doha
12:25 — Dhulh
15:54 — 'Asr
18:34 — Maghreb
19:52 — 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetlith, Tel. 810700
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 641590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 641757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 635441

Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 625433
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiout International Church Tel. 625226
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 641195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Unstable weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at high altitudes. There will be local showers and drizzle. In Asqa, the weather will be partly cloudy with northerly winds and sea calm.
Min/Max. temp.
Amman 16/28
Asqa 24/34

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDER

Deserts 13/30
Jordan Valley 20/33
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28.6, Asqa 33, Humidity readings: Amman 15 per cent, Asqa 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Yousef Al Faqih 756988
Dr. Fakhri Tayeh 865880
Dr. Abdul Wahab Awad 846070
Dr. Basim Qaddumi 648633
First pharmacy 661912
Fendous pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nahroukh pharmacy 623672
Al Salan pharmacy 636730
Yaoub pharmacy 644945
Sawad pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 874222
BRID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Za'bi (—)
Al Ouds Pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Isma Al Ousri 901266
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Response 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 642816
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malles, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shamsani 664171/4
Shamsani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Masdar Hospital 667271/9
The Islamic, Abdali 664164/6
Al-Ahli, Abdali 771013/3
Italian, Al-Muhajirin 771013/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/30
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)980732
Al Isha Modern Hospital (09)90990
BRID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)75555

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:30 — Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
09:05 — New Delhi (RJ)
10:15 — Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
10:30 — Karachi, Dubai (RJ)
10:30 — Cairo, Asqa (RJ)
10:55 — Beirut (RJ)
11:00 — Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)
11:00 — Colombo (RJ)
12:00 — Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:45 — Larnaca (CY)
11:30 — Samos (TY)
12:30 — Moscow, Doha (GF)
13:30 — Rome (AZ)
14:45 — Dubai, Damascus (EM)
15:45 — Larnaca (CY)
15:45 — Paris, Damascus (AF)
22:30 — Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 — Paris (RJ)
12:30 — Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:30 — Istanbul (RJ)
12:45 — Bangkok (RJ)
12:45 — Paris (RJ)
12:50 — Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:45 — Cairo (RJ)
15:45 — London (RJ)
16:15 — Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
16:30 — Damascus (RJ)
22:15 — Larnaca (RJ)
Other Flights (Terminal 2)
07:05 — Larnaca (CY)
09:15 — Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

Uppercase price in fils per kg.
Apple 6000
Banana (Malaysian) 250
Banana (Indonesian) 220
Cabbage 140
Carrot 400
Cauliflower 250
Cucumbers (large) 140
Cucumbers (small) 250
Eggplant 250
Fig 250
Garlic 850
Grapes 340
Guava 630
Lemon 220
Marrow (large) 220
Marrow (small) 420
Mushrooms 180
Onion (dry) 950
Onion (wet) 240
Pepper (hot) 340
Pepper (sweet) 250
Potato 400
Tomato 130
Sweet melon 260
Watermelon 160



A DAY TO REMEMBER: A year ago yesterday (Friday) Jordanians rejoiced in His Majesty King Hussein's return home following successful cancer surgery in the United States. In an unprecedented outpour of emotions over one million Jordanians thronged the streets of Amman to greet their leader. The

emphoric celebration of King Hussein's safe return was described by many observers and analysts as not only a welcome but a "resounding oath of allegiance." No event in Jordan's history has galvanised as many people (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Hi-tech show features available lab, medical equipment in Jordan

By Kathrine Rath
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Thirty international manufacturers were invited to exhibit the latest technological developments in laboratory and medical equipment, computers, as well as educational and teaching aids in a three-day event that ended here Friday.

The "open your eyes to the future" science and computer exhibition held at the Hotel Jordan Inter-Continental, included several renowned firms, such as Hewlett-Packard, Bard, Hitachi, Howmedica (Pfizer) and Bird, were represented.

A large part of the exhibition was devoted to medical and laboratory equipment. Showcased was a wide range of products spanning from sterilising apparatus and orthopaedic equipment, to ventilators and blood pressure monitors.

Of special interest to the

Jordanian visitor was the laser equipment which has been on loan to (the Jordanian Armed Forces) Royal Medical Services (RMS) from the Scientific and Medical Supplies Company (SMS) in Amman for a week and which recently was shown on television.

The laser has a wide variety of clinical applications, but it was used by the RMS to treat patients suffering from benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) prostate (tumour), one of the exhibitors told the Jordan Times.

It is a bloodless technique which, according to Bard Regional Sales Manager Simon Finnmore, has important advantages over normal surgical procedures.

Mr. Finnmore explained that one of the side-effects of conventional prostate surgery is that the patient can come to suffer from retrograde ejaculation which leads to infertility.

Treated with laser, the patient stands a greater chance of continuing to father children, the said.

A highly sophisticated right angle laser fibre which reflects the laser energy in 90 degrees is used. The treatment takes 30 minutes as opposed to over one hour with normal surgery and does not require hospitalisation, according to Mr. Finnmore.

The laser will be made available to the RMS for another three months.

The exhibit's computer display was dominated by Hewlett-Packard which showed a broad spectrum of hardware and software products, mainly for the advanced or professional user.

A featured software example was a programme called Miss ILS (Integrated Library System), which is in use at the Yarmouk University Library as well as in 15 other libraries in Jordan. The university library was computerised about four years ago. According to SMS Service Manager Jamal Qaffaf, the ILS greatly improves the library service and makes it much easier and quicker to use.

A mechanical engineering computer was demonstrated by one of the exhibitors. It can be used to design mechanical constructions as well as to visualise and analyse their operation before production. A machine like this is in operation at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) and is used in the RSS's Energy Research Programme, according to Mr. Qaffaf.

Also on display was a range of portable computers, business management applications, computer network technology, test and measurement equipment as well as a selection of electronic dictionaries, including one made for the blind.

The exhibition was organised by SMS to celebrate the firm's 40th anniversary.

Palestinians frustrated by lack of alternatives

By Mariam M. Shabih
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Feelings of confusion, uncertainty and frustration for lack of alternatives created an atmosphere of tension and anger during an almost three-hour discourse between a panel of Palestinian and Jordanian politicians opposed to the PLO-Israel agreement on self-rule and an audience of more than a 1,000 people Thursday evening at the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation.

Five politicians spoke of "long term solutions" to liberate Palestine which differ from the approach taken by the PLO Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

A "samud" or steadfast attitude against the Israeli occupation, which would last until "demographic factors" create an Arab majority within Israel and the occupied territories, was one alternative offered to Thursday's audience by veteran Palestinian politician and prominent lawyer Ibrahim Bakr, a staunch opponent of the Gaza-Jericho first proposal.

"If we wait a while the Arabs will outnumber the Jews in Israel and eventually the occupation and the dominance of Jews over Arabs will melt away — this is one alternative," said Mr. Bakr.

Long term approaches, which entail a continuing popular uprising and steadfastness of the Palestinians under occupation against Israel were the only real alternatives fielded by the five speakers who included former PLO Minister of Culture Abdullah Hourani, Ibrahim Bakr, Fatah liaison with the occupied territories Abbas Zaki, former member of the Palestinian Communist Party Ghazi Sourani and Jordanian political commentator and columnist Muna Shukier.

But the audience, which was evidently more against the accord than in favour, wanted more tangible and immediate solutions and challenged the panel to provide them.

"These solutions cannot be easily provided because the solution is a long process rather than a quick political decision that will bring immediate results," said Mr. Hourani.

"What is the alternative to the Arab-Rabin accord is a very difficult question," said Ibrahim Bakr. "There are many aspects to the answer and not all is certain — the process of liberating Palestine must come about by creating facts on the ground and that takes time."

Mr. Bakr, a veteran Palestinian analyst and commentator who retired from political life to return to his law office years ago, became engaged in a heated debate with a member of the audience who challenged him to "find a better start to liberate Palestine."

Mr. Bakr, along with the rest of the panel are against the accord and characterise its proponents as "submitting to fate" rather than "choosing their fate."

The panel, most of which have had long first hand contact with the PLO chairman, say the pact is self-defeating in the long run because it signed away too many of the Palestinian rights.

"We did not need the mutual recognition now, we could have held off on that till we got more guarantees of our

rights from the Israelis," said Mr. Hourani who was an early supporter of the 1991 Madrid launched Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Disillusioned, Mr. Hourani believes that Thursday's audience and most Palestinians have gone from being "shocked to confused to silent." "The problem is that at the moment there is no clear programme of action for those opposed to the Arafat-Rabin accord," he said.

Many opponents to the mutual recognition between Israel and the PLO have argued that Israel has not defined its borders and thus Mr. Arafat did not exactly know what he was recognising.

Abas Zaki is one of the main supporters of the intifada, and as a former PLO military man he believes that armed struggle will eventually exhaust the enemy. "The intifada will make the Israeli's want to withdraw completely — if it can only continue."

"The intifada as we know it has ended," said Ibrahim Bakr.

Many in the audience wondered if the Palestinians had become exhausted of armed struggle before the Israelis.

Majali says government is willing to amend press association law

Premier urges audit bureau's monitoring of public funds

AMMAN (J.T.) — The government is willing to introduce amendments to the Jordan Press Association (JPA) Law to safeguard public interest, according to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali.

Speaking at a meeting Thursday with JPA president Suleiman Al Qudah and association council members, the prime minister said Jordanian journalists enjoy responsible freedoms and are guided by their conscience regarding the accuracy of information and in serving the national interests.

The JPA has been demanding the amendments to bring the law up to date.

Expressing pride in what he called strong bridges between the JPA and the government, Dr. Majali said the government fully upholds the principle of "the rule of law" and is totally committed to the principles of freedom and public service.

He said the government plans also to apply decentralisation through granting more

powers to the governors in the provinces.

Mr. Qudah presented the view of the journalists to the prime minister, adding that the JPA and the journalists were shouldering additional burdens at the present stage.

He urged the government to force the newspapers to abide by the provisions of a 1983 agreement calling on them to pay the JPA one per cent of their income from advertisement.

The JPA has no such payments to date, Mr. Qudah said.

He also called on the government to help the JPA in setting up a journalists' club on the outskirts of Amman to serve as an activities centre for the press.

Mr. Qudah also asked that the government increase its annual financial assistance to the associations and the journalists' housing projects.

In reply, Dr. Majali said he understood the JPA problems and promised to study all the related issues.



Abdul Salam Al Majali

Premier visits Audit Bureau

Also Thursday, Dr. Majali visited Audit Bureau and urged its officials to continue to monitor government spending of public funds.

The government is eager to modernise the financial system, said the prime minister, adding that the bureau should

step up efforts towards ensuring the collection of funds due to the state.

Likening the bureau's function to that of Parliament in monitoring the application of laws and regulations, Dr. Majali said that the bureau goes a step further by pinpointing the violations and altering the executive and legislative branches of government to them.

He told the meeting, which was attended by the Bureau Chief Adel Qudah and heads of various bureau branches, that the creative and competent employees should be rounded so that the bureau can raise its work and service standards.

The prime minister reviewed the government's economic and political policies, explaining the government's views regarding the economic restructuring programme which has been agreed on with the International Monetary Fund and Jordan's external debts.

Mr. Qudah reviewed the main duties of the bureau.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Trade ministry to organise fairs

AMMAN — A Royal Decree was issued Friday endorsing the revised Ministry of Industry and Trade regulation expanding the duties of the ministry of cover holding industrial fairs. Commenting on the regulation, Minister of Industry and Trade Bassam Al Saket said the Ministry will look into requests for holding trade and industrial exhibits and fairs inside and outside the country. It will also look into requests made by other countries to hold such exhibitions in Jordan and approve them after ensuring their observance of the conditions set forth by the ministry.

Princess Sarvath visits Bosnian families

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath Thursday visited the Bosnian families centre in Amman and was briefed on the services offered to them by the Jordanian government and people. The Princess called for providing the Bosnians with educational services and stressed the need to overcome obstacles in enrolling Bosnian students at Jordanian universities. She urged the Bosnian families to take up vocational training which the centre is providing them so that they can learn a trade which would be useful in their homeland. The Princess distributed gifts to 100 Bosnian children. The centre houses 400 Bosnians as guests of the Jordanian Hashemite Charity Organisation which provides for their accommodation, food, medical services and education.

Iraqi art festival opens

AMMAN (Petra) — Assistant Secretary General of the Ministry of Culture Mahmoud Al Tal Friday opened the first Iraqi Art Festival at Alia Art Gallery. The Festival includes plates of 120 Iraqi artists. The week-long event aims to enhance art cooperation between Alia Art Gallery and the Iraqi artists.

Free medical day opens

JURF AL DARAWISH (Petra) — Deputising for Her Royal Highness Princess Alia Bint 'Al Hussein, Ministry of Health Secretary General Adnan Abbas Friday inaugurated the Free Medical Activities Day organised by the Hashemite Medical Team of the Great Arab Revolt

Club in Jurf Al Darawish. Mr. Abbas praised the role played by the medical team and stressed the need for focusing more on education rather than on medical treatment. He said that prevention is the correct and safest way to ensure a strong and healthy society. Taking part in the activities of the day were doctors from the ministry of health, the University of Jordan and the private sector.

Jordan, Syria prepare for economic meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian economic delegation, led by Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Marwan Awad Friday left for Damascus to prepare for the Jordan-Syrian Economic Committee meeting, which will be held at the ministerial level in Amman next month. The delegation includes representatives of the ministries of Industry and Trade, Finance and Customs, Transport, the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and the Joint Jordanian-Syrian Industrial Company.

Physiotherapy group elects panel

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Physiotherapy Association Friday elected a 7-member new administrative committee chaired by Muhdi Al Hajj. The association elected Saleh Alraiabi as secretary and Zuhair Abbasi, Abdul Rahman Makhoul, Mohammad Adwan, Shaker Abu Hatab and Hanadi Tuffaha as members.

400 Dutch travel agents arrive

AMMAN (Petra) — Delegations of travel and tourist agents from Holland arrived here Friday to take part in the 21st Annual Conference of Travel Agents which will be held at the Jordan International Hotel today (Saturday), according to Ministry of Tourism sources. The sources said the conference will serve as an opportunity for 400 travel and tour agents to look at the advance standards of the tourism industry in Jordan. The conference will discuss means of promoting tourism to Jordan and Holland. Taking part in the conference are representatives of airline and hotel companies, economists, and journalists from Holland and Europe, in addition to travel agents from Jordan. The ministry, in cooperation with Royal Jordanian (RJ) and the private sector has prepared a programme of visits to archaeological sites and other tourist attractions in Jordan.

WHAT'S GOING ON EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Art exhibition of old and new paintings from private collections by Samia Zarn at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ The first International Festival of Fine Arts entitled "Colour and Light in the Nabatean Civilisation" at the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts.
- ★ Art exhibition of paintings on Petra by British artist Caroline Dobson at the British Council.
- ★ Iraqi Art Festival at the Alia Art Gallery.
- ★ Exhibition of paintings and photographic pictures of old Baghdad by Nadim Mubsis at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Art exhibition by Egyptian artist H. Bilar at the Balqa' Art Gallery in Fuhels.
- ★ Permanent exhibition of 58 artists and "Chalk" Exhibition at Darat Al Foun of the Abdul Hamid Shoman Foundation in Jabal Laweibdeh (10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Fridays 10 a.m.-5 p.m.) Tel. 643251-2
- ★ Exhibition of paintings by Jordanian artist Blahara Najjar at Eshbela Art Gallery, Amra Shopping Centre.

SCIENTIFIC EXHIBITION

- ★ Annual Scientific Meeting Exhibition at the exhibition hall in the University of Jordan's Student Affairs Department.

Russian crisis

highways and railway tracks" if their demand was not met. The Russian federation is made up of 88 territories, republics, regions and autonomous areas. The Congress adjourned the emergency session after its leader survived a challenge to his authority. Vice-President Alexander

Rutskoi took the floor to defend Russian Khasbulatov after a senior deputy proposed replacing him as chairman of the legislature.

Mr. Rutskoi, sworn in by deputies as acting president after Mr. Yeltsin's decree, accused some deputies of trying to "to flee in good time and to betray in good time."

"It is a shame. Who is changing horses in mid-stream? We will be laughing stock of the whole world," he said.

The proposal to remove Mr. Khasbulatov by Benjamin Sokolov, head of one of the two chambers of the standing parliament, was also condemned by the leader of the other chamber, Ramazan Abdulatipov.

It was not clear why Mr. Sokolov, supported by prominent hardliner Sergei Baburin, was seeking Mr. Khasbulatov's removal or if the issue would resurface when the emergency

congress reconvenes on Saturday at 10.00 a.m. (0600 GMT). Russia's constitutional court meanwhile suggested a plan aimed at breaking the stalemate between the Kremlin and the parliament with a compromise based on early general elections.

Chief Justice Valery Zorkin told the parliament that the court would suspend its ruling that Mr. Yeltsin's dissolution of the legislature was unconstitutional provided both sides

agreed to several conditions. The scheme was unlikely, however, to be treated seriously by the Kremlin, which has repeatedly explained why Mr. Yeltsin opposes simultaneous presidential, and legislative elections and has declared the current parliament "terminated."

Under the plan, Mr. Zorkin said the Congress of People's Deputies, the full-scale legislature, should be scrapped immediately and general elections held on Dec. 12.

CONDOLENCES

The Editor and Staff of the Jordan Times express their sincere condolences to their friend and colleague Lamis Andoni on the death of her grandmother **Labibah Yacoub Salem**
May God bless her soul



The number of taxis registered with the General Association of Owners of Public Cars total approximately 8,000 in the Kingdom (Photo by Aynsley Floyd)

when he went to the GAOPC to seek help and assistance, he was advised to go to the Traffic Department and complain.

"It is the association's job to stand by me and help me. Instead, I had to go to the traffic department and defend myself on my own," he said.

But the GAOPC President Kausi said: "We in the association always stand with the drivers and support them when

needed. But in some cases, it is the driver who has caused a major problem and we cannot help him," Mr. Kausi maintained.

The public drivers contacted by the Jordan Times all had the same opinion of the GAOPC.

The GAOPC is just a symbol and doesn't serve a purpose they contended. It is there just to collect money and fix meters, they added.

Jordan Times

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MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
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Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Jordan Times advertising department.

Comprehensive solution required

AMMAN MUNICIPALITY deserves high marks for its expeditious work on tunnel across University Road to facilitate street crossing for university students. From the looks of things, the municipality will complete its work on the tunnel in a record time having finished already the first phase of the construction. Yet, we believe that such a piecemeal approach to pedestrian plight in Jordan, especially those faced by students and children, is not the right approach. The local government may have solved partially the problem for students attending the University of Jordan but this is very little as far as the rest of the student body in Amman and elsewhere in the country is concerned.

The sight of children attempting to cross the main arteries of their communities at a great risk to their lives must have attracted also the attention of the concerned authorities. People dashing through the congested streets for work or studies or whatever need a comprehensive approach and resolution.

Constructing underpasses or overpasses for a select of people is not the kind of remedy that Jordanians look for or are entitled to. From a strictly economic point of view, the price tag of the ongoing construction of a tunnel in the vicinity of the entrance of the University of Jordan is estimated to be about JD 120,000. Would it not have been more cost-effective if traffic lights were used to interrupt the flow of traffic on the main thoroughfares of the capital in order to allow street crossing?

Admittedly no price is high enough to provide safe street crossing for pedestrians because the loss of life and body injuries have even a higher price tag. In relative terms, though, more frequent deployment to traffic lights buttressed by the presence of police would do the same job at a much lesser cost. Throughout Amman, for example, whether on Mecca street or Wasfi Al Tal (Gardens) street, there are hardly enough traffic lights to facilitate avenue crossings with safety. In Shmeisania area, the fast developing commercial district is woefully lacking traffic lights to alleviate traffic conditions and above all to provide safe passages for pedestrians. The same applies in Um Utheina district and elsewhere in the metropolis. From end to end, Gardens street, for example, has not even one single traffic light system. Only by providing traffic lights can the pedestrian crisis be resolved not just by digging expensive tunnels and causing inconvenience to the public in this process and others like it.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily bitterly criticised a decision by the U.N. Security Council to extend the present embargo on Iraq for occupying Kuwait in 1990, saying that the innocent children of Iraq are paying the price. The paper said that by maintaining the embargo, the world community is continuing to starve the Iraqi children and deprive them of medicine and other necessities for life. It is regrettable to see the world community taking such a decision which would cause the death and suffering of millions of innocent people under the pretext that the measure is being adopted in compliance with the requirements of the international legitimacy, added the daily. It said we also regret to see the Arab League Council discussing everything except the question of lifting the embargo imposed on Iraq for the past three years. The Arab states which are endorsing this embargo against Iraq are the same countries for which Iraq had fought and provided help at the time of its wars with Israel, said the paper. The Iraqis are persevering and are waiting patiently, but, said the paper, the future is for the Iraqis who, despite their suffering, are building for a brighter future.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour commended a government move to float the prices of food supplies in Jordan. Mohammad Daoud said that the move was bound to open the door wide for competition among the local merchants, something, he said, that would result in a reduction of prices. Freeing trade in the country is bound to bring the prices down in view of the competition among merchants, to the benefit of the consumers, he said. For instance, he said, some types of imported powdered milk have gone down over the past few months due to competition among importers and without the interference of the Ministry of Supply in this matter. Therefore, he said, the ministry's course of action is bound to succeed. But, he added, the ministry should always be ready to interfere and put things right if matters tend to get out of control when merchants display their greed, he demanded. We want the Ministry of Supply to keep monitoring the situation and control any manipulations lest the limited-income groups suffer, he added.

Jordanian Perspective

Opposition will be fierce, but not enough to derail self-rule

IN THE countdown to the implementation of the groundbreaking Israel-PLO accord, one of the preoccupations of many in and outside the Middle East is how strong an opposition the so-called rejectionists could put up in their campaign to derail the agreement.

One of the key elements here is the fact that the Sept. 13 accord enjoys the overwhelming support of a majority of the world community, which is also putting together an assistance package to improve the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip — the people whose life is most immediately affected by the agreement.

The efficient and honest use of those funds is crucial to the success of the first phase of the Sept. 13 accord signed by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Israel.

To a large extent, improvement in the living conditions of the Palestinians under occupation will depend on how efficiently the funds are used. One cannot expect an overnight boom in the Palestinian economy, but it is very important that the bureaucracy of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) move fast to create facts on the ground to convince its constituency that an end is in sight to the suffering under occupation.

This may not be easy, given the grip Israel has on the occupied territories. But then, it is also in Israeli interests to extend honest cooperation to the Palestinians to ensure that the frustration over daily life under occupation — the recipe that prompts a working father of five to wield a knife against the occupier — is alleviated.

I would even venture to say that a large segment of the support base of the Islamic fundamentalists in the poverty-stricken Gaza Strip could be dislodged and set on a mainstream course if the living conditions are improved and job opportunities are available.

There is little doubt that by and large, people turn to their faith for solace under conditions of severity. In the case of the Gaza Strip, the support that the Islamists enjoy is partly due to the economic hardship.

The other, equally if not more important, factor is the fact that a majority of the Strip's inhabitants are 1948 refugees — meaning that they have little to gain from any accord falling short of clear stipulations as to their right to return to their homes (a non-starter since those homes are in what has come to be recognised as Israel proper) or to receive compensation (a starter if U.N. Resolution 194 is made operative). It is only natural that the 1948 refugees would turn to any group, Islamist or otherwise, which advocates the elimination of the state of Israel since, realisable or otherwise, such an objective is much more comforting to them.

Having said that, it does not mean that the people of the Gaza Strip, refugees or otherwise, are politically naive. If anything, the Palestinians in the occupied territories are some of the most politicised in the world. But it is the faith and those who preach their faith to them that are clouding their judgement of the feasibility or unfeasibility of what they seek to achieve.

In any case, I am one of those who staunchly believe that improving the living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories with immediate effect will take care of half the opposition to the peace accord if only because people would stand to lose something then as opposed to very little as things stand now.

The other half stems from political Islam or Islamist politics and leftist orientations which are unable to see the writing on the wall (or read the writing the way they want to).

In the context of Islamist rejection of the accord, it is clear that without external support, no group, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad, will be able to press their case with any serious effect.

By and large, Iran's influence on Hamas has waned. Tehran, falling victim to its quest for complete domination of the group. Unlike Lebanon's Hizbollah, which asks how high whenever Iran asks it to jump, Hamas has always retained its independent character and approach.

In the last three years, Hamas has been steadily resisting Iranian attempts to implant Tehran's puppets in the leadership of the group. The resistance has subsequently led to the replacement of the staunch pro-Iranian camp which once led Hamas.

Furthermore, the shift in government from a hardline camp to a relatively moderate stream led by President Hashemi Rafsanjani in Tehran has dealt a severe blow to the designs of the radical camp.

The Majlis (parliament) of Iran has refused to release \$12 million, earmarked for "support of Islamic movements" by its hardline predecessor. Newcomers to the house argued that they could not stay committed to a pledge made by those who occupied their seats earlier, particularly that the entire purpose of the exercise was not related to internal needs at a time when the Tehran regime needs every resource it could

gather to pacify its own growingly impatient population.

No doubt, Iranian rhetoric will continue and grow to alarming expressions against any Arab-Israeli peace agreement. The Iranian hardliners might even find fault with an accord that provides for an unequivocal return of all Arab territories to Arab sovereignty. But that will not mean much in practical terms in the occupied territories and in terms of Hamas activities there.

Furthermore, the aid that the oil-rich Gulf states has been extending to Hamas was always contingent on non-cooperation with Iran. Again, all signs are that the donors, prompted by the U.S. and Europe, have already shut off the taps of aid to hardline Islamic groups.

Islamic Jihad, which emerged in the early 1980s as a group to reckon with in Gaza Strip, has largely been marginalised in the absence of an effective leadership and finances. Still, it could carry out an act or two detrimental to the peace process, and one has to be mentally prepared to accept that such events are inevitable.

Other Palestinian Islamist groups, such as the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine and Hizbollah-Palestine, fall more or less along the same lines as Islamic Jihad. However, their political viability has been bent out of shape simply because their major ally, the Hizbollah of Lebanon, is also squirming under intense pressure from the Beirut government as well as Damascus (it was very telling Thursday when Dennis Ross, the Clinton administration's coordinator for the Middle East, said in a satellite press conference that Washington was exercising its options to isolate the groups that oppose the Israel-PLO accord).

That brings us to the leftist-oriented groups, the two main PLO factions that have a large support base in the occupied territories — the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP).

The PFLP, led by Dr. George Habash, used to have a strong say and influence in various Palestinian trade unions and labour movements since the early 1970s, while the DFLP had its main support base among Palestinian women's movements. But PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's strategy of withholding or selectively releasing funds to the groups since the mid-80s made them unreliable umbrellas for dedicated followers who relied on them for financial assistance and allowed the mainstream Fateh to make inroads into the factions.

Again, it was no coincidence that Bassam Abu Sharif, a long-time Habash lieutenant, defected to Mr. Arafat and DFLP leader Nayef Hawatme found his group split in the middle by his one-time close ally Yasser Abed Rabbo. The cunning hands of Mr. Arafat were at work in both cases (to a large extent, Mr. Arafat appears also to have weakened his own Fateh group lest it might rear a strong head against his course of actions).

In any event, the situation today in the occupied territories is that of a fragmented, financially weak and politically isolated opposition trying to fight an internationally-backed group armed with the financial clout to pacify the man of the street.

Eyebrows could be raised in scepticism if we take a closer look at the internal PLO mainstream leadership. It would appear, judging from information gained from people who should be in the know, that the opposition put up by Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department and a veteran who served as a *de facto* foreign minister of the Palestinians; and by Abdullah Hourani, an independent who served as head of the Cultural Department, was a carefully orchestrated scenario.

Whether or not one believes it, it appears that Mr. Kaddoumi and Mr. Hourani accepted the "temporary" sacrifice of assuming the role of opposition to Mr. Arafat lest anything went wrong with the so-called "super Monday" signing of the agreement with Israel.

After all, someone had to be waiting in the wings to pick up from Mr. Arafat if things did indeed go wrong, and who could be a better choice other than those who the PLO chairman could trust.

The next few days and weeks will prove the accuracy or otherwise of the predictions of some that Mr. Kaddoumi (who mysteriously is a member of a PLO panel charting post-super Monday strategy) and Mr. Hourani will "rehabilitate" themselves into the mainstream PLO ranks.

But in the meantime, the net picture that emerges from the Palestinian opposition on the ground is that of a more or less neutralised rejectionist camp.

Of course, that should not be taken as a green light for Mr. Arafat to go ahead and do what he wants to do in the occupied territories. There will be opposition, and fierce opposition at that, but not of a level that could derail the PLO apple cart and the peace wagon (in that order).

By Dr. Musa Keilani

U.S. will promote democracy, market economies

By Russell Dybvik
USIA

WASHINGTON — With America's core concepts of democracy and market economies more broadly accepted around the world than ever, U.S. "interests and ideals compel us not only to be engaged, but to lead," says Anthony Lake, President Clinton's national security affairs adviser.

"It is a moment of unparalleled opportunity," Lake declared in an address to the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies in Washington September 21. "We have the blessing of living in the world's most powerful and respected nation at a time when the world is embracing our ideals as never before."

Lake's speech was designed to launch a national public debate on the need for America's continued global engagement. It followed by one day a New York address by Secretary of State Christopher which focused on the Middle East. The president is to deliver his own major foreign policy address before the United Nations General Assembly on September 27.

"For half a century, America's engagement in the world revolved around containment of a hostile Soviet Union. Our efforts helped block Soviet expansionism, topple Communist repression, and secure a great victory for human freedom," Lake pointed out.

"The successor to a doctrine of containment must be a strategy of enlargement — enlargement of the world's free community of market democracies," he said. That strategy has four basic components:

— That the community of major market democracies, including the U.S., should be strengthened.

— New democracies and market economies should be fostered and consolidated where possible, especially in states of special significance and opportunity.

— The core market democracies must counter the aggression and support the liberalisation of states hostile to democracy and markets.

— The Free World's humanitarian agenda must be pursued not only by providing aid, but also by working to help democracy and market economies take root in regions of greatest humanitarian concern.

"We have come into the new era with relatively few ways to convince a skeptical public that engagement abroad is a worthwhile investment," Lake observed. "That is why a national dialogue over our fundamental purposes is so important."

Faced with high deficits and pressing domestic needs, the administration must make a "convincing case" for U.S. en-

gagement abroad or face drastic reductions in military, intelligence, peacekeeping and foreign policy budgets, he warned.

But engagement is not enough, Lake said. In addition to the broad acceptance of America's core concepts — democracy and market economies — America's power, authority and example provide unparalleled opportunities to lead, he noted.

While there is no "credible near-term threat to America's existence" in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse, serious threats do remain, he said. These include terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, ethnic conflicts, and the degradation of the global environment.

Above all, we are threatened by sluggish economic growth," the national security adviser warned. This problem also affects allies in Europe, Canada and Japan. "That is why we are leading the effort to secure a successful GATT agreement by December 15," he said. Relations with Europe, Canada, and Japan are also affected by a military problem involving NATO, he said.

"At the NATO Summit that the president has called for this January, we will seek to update NATO, so that there continues behind the enlargement of market democracies an essential collective security," he said.

The effort to broaden global democracy and market economies must target states that affect U.S. strategic interests, such as those with large economies, critical locations, nuclear weapons, or the potential to generate refugee flows to the U.S. or to key friends and allies, Lake said.

"We must be patient," he cautioned. "We must be ready for uneven progress, and outright reversals." If that happens, the United States must be willing "to take immediate public positions" to help staunch those reversals, as it has in Haiti, Guatemala and Nigeria, he said. The strategy for promoting democracy must also be pragmatic and it must respect diversity, Lake emphasised.

Reactionary "backlash" states, such as Iran and Iraq, may engage in violence and lawlessness that threatens the United States and other democracies and "are more likely to sponsor terrorism and traffic in weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile technology," he said.

"Our policy toward such states, so long as they act as they do, must seek to isolate them diplomatically, militarily, economically, and technologically," he emphasised.

In the coming months, he said, the administration will work with Congress to refocus U.S. assistance programme.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation is vital at the crucial stage the region passes through

Reviewed by Ella Nasrallah

Jordanian newspapers last week continued its discussion regarding the repercussions of the PLO-Israeli deal, its impact on Jordan and the Palestinians and the future prospects of peace in the region. A host of domestic issues, including the prospect of postponing the Nov. 8 elections, were also tackled.

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's visit to Jordan was a success and the Jordanians and the Palestinians are now entering a new era of closer cooperation, said Sawt Al Shaab daily in a commentary.

The paper welcomed the Palestinian-Jordanian agreement on future cooperation as a vital step in view of the crucial and sensitive stage through which the region is passing. It said that Mr. Arafat's visit has removed a great deal of mystery that shrouded the situation and the mutual coordination.

Bader Abdul Haq, a columnist in Al Ra'i, cast a gloomy look at the future of the Palestinians in light of the PLO-Israeli deal. He said that the attitude of the Israelis, their continued massing of weapons and their arrogance give little hope for a bright future for the Palestinians.

The writer criticised those who, he said, have fallen

victim to the temptations and are deceived by promises of financial help and also those who have forgotten about the Palestinians' struggle and have settled for promises of a gloomy future.

If the PLO succeeds in returning 860,000 refugees and displaced people to their homeland, it will have made a major gain in its life, said Taher Al Udwan, a columnist in Al Dustour.

Indeed, the PLO-Israeli deal provides for the repatriation of the refugees who were forgotten for over 45 years, said the writer. Those opposing the deal, he added, should realise that any step that would repatriate the refugees and ensure a state for them must be welcomed by the Arab Nation as more important than creating a strategic balance with the Zionist enemy.

A columnist in Al Ra'i criticised the annexes to the PLO-Israeli deal which provide for the Israelis to have a share in Palestinian water resources but not vice versa, and a clause about a completely free trade zone between Palestine and Israel but with no protection whatsoever for the Palestinian products.

He expressed fear that the Israelis would plan to set up

factories in Palestine and market them in the Arab countries through Jordan.

Mahmoud Rimawi, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily, said that the United States now plans to cancel U.N. Security Council Resolution 242, in the wake of the PLO-Israeli deal.

As it had cancelled a previous U.N. General Assembly resolution, that equated Zionism with racism, the United States is now trying to cancel Resolution 242 despite the fact that none of its provisions has been implemented, said the writer.

The PLO, in its drive to improve relations with Washington, could succumb to the American wishes and accept its decision and that of the Security Council, a move which would further enhance the Israeli stand in the region.

Sulran Al Hattab, columnist in Al Ra'i, referred to the Jordanian stand with regard to the PLO-Israeli agreement and echoed His Majesty the King's warning that he would be the enemy of those who try to tamper with national unity.

The writer said that King Hussein has underlined the importance of maintaining and protecting the national unity and the need to provide the Palestinians with all

forms of help at this stage.

Since Jordan has handed over the leadership of the Palestinian people to the PLO, said the writer, it can only extend support for this leadership to help attain the Palestinian people's national aspirations.

Referring to the Jordanian-Palestinian agenda, signed on Sept. 14, Fahd Al Fanek, a writer in Al Ra'i, said Jordan has stressed that its negotiations with Israel aim at arriving at a just, durable and comprehensive peace.

But for this peace to be achieved, Israel has to comply with the provisions of the U.N. resolutions calling for the repatriation of the refugees and should respect Jordan's water rights.

The writer said that Jordan should be careful as the negotiations with Israel would result in benefits sought by the Kingdom in economic and political fields, and if Israel needs five years, as it says, to make sure of the good intentions of the Palestinians before giving them more rights, Jordan is in need of five more years to trust the intentions and behaviour of Israel before embarking on normal relations with the Jewish state.

Salameh Ekour, an out-

spoken critic of the PLO, said that despite its joint committee with Jordan, the PLO went behind the Jordanian government and made a unilateral deal with Israel.

The columnist, who writes for Sawt Al Shaab, said that Jordan respects the Palestinian right to take their own decisions, in accordance with Palestinian interests. But, he said, Jordan and the Jordanians also have all the right to take whatever measure they see fit to ensure their own national rights.

Taher Al Udwan urged the government to go ahead with plans to hold the national elections on schedule. The columnist, who writes for Al Dustour, said that only those who are enemies of democracy fear the elections.

Delaying the elections means having to do without democracy for a long time, said Fahd Al Fanek, echoing Udwan's views. The writer said that under the present economic situation, and in view of the fast-moving political developments, a Parliament is a necessity for Jordan. He said that some of those calling for postponing the general elections claim that this move is necessary because the residents of the refugee camps are bound to return. He said that elections

could be held again in case of such a development.

Their views were countered by George Haddad, a columnist in Al Dustour, who said that the latest PLO-Israeli deal, which, he said, is considered as a catastrophe for the Arab Nation, requires from Jordan to take time to think of means to deal with the consequences and so should delay the elections.

Several writers criticised the government's decision not to allow government employees to write in the press. Omar Abanda, a columnist in Al Ra'i, said that the 15th article of the Jordanian Constitution provides for freedom of expression for each and every citizen, in writing and other means, provided he respects the Jordanian laws.

The writer said that successive governments have allowed employees to work after the official office hours. Another writer, Musa Subhi, said that preventing people from expressing their free views in the press is an encroachment on their rights given them by the Constitution.

He said that under democracy, such a move on the part of the government is totally surprising.

Handwritten note: *مكتبة عبد الله*

Lebanon puts '94 budget at \$2.4b

BEIRUT (R) — The Lebanese government approved Thursday a 4.194 billion Lebanese liras (\$2.4 billion) budget for 1994 — a rise of nearly 10 per cent over the current year.

Fuad Siniora, the minister of state for finance, forecast a 42 per cent deficit.

The cabinet set "ordinary" expenditure including ministerial allocations at 3,800 billion liras (\$2.2 billion) and supplementary expenditures at 394 billion liras (\$228 million).

The supplementary allocations cover telecommunications, the national lottery and the office of grains and sugar beet and are expected to be matched or exceeded by the revenues of the three institutions.

The budget, which needs parliamentary approval, was 9.9 per cent higher than the 1993 figure of 3,816 billion liras (\$2.2 billion). The 1993 budget was issued by the cabinet only last month and must also be approved by parliament.

Mr. Siniora's forecast of a 42 per cent deficit for 1994 indicated that expected revenue would be around 2,200 billion liras (\$1.27 billion). Revenue for 1993 was estimated at 1,701 billion pounds (\$986 million).

Defence again took the biggest share at 534 billion liras (\$309 million) or 24 per cent of allocations for ministries, a local newspaper said. It gave 1993 defence spending at 476 billion liras (\$276 million).

Mr. Siniora said one-third of expenditure would go towards boosting investment and economic development and another third to payments on the internal and external debts, which stand at 3.2 billion and 1 billion respectively.

He said grants and soft loans from Arab countries and other foreign sources could raise 1994 expenditures by 1,000 billion liras (\$550 million).

France awarded Lebanon two soft loans Thursday totalling \$24 million and a \$5 million grant towards rebuilding the country's wrecked water and electricity grids.

The deal was signed in Beirut by a French official and head of the semi-official council for Development and Reconstruction.

PLO wary of economic cooperation with Israel

TUNIS (R) — The PLO is suspicious of Israel's economic plans for the West Bank and Gaza and will encourage economic ties with the Arab hinterland as a counterweight, a PLO leader said in an interview.

Yasser Abed Rabbo, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, told the Tunisian newspaper Al Ra'y Al Amm

that Israel wanted the territories to remain part of its economic sphere of influence and to become a bridge to penetrate the Arab World.

In their agreement on self-rule for the territories, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) also agreed to set up a committee to discuss cooperation in trade, finance, industry, transport,

communications, energy and electricity.

But Mr. Abed Rabbo said: "Israel's aim is to make (Palestinian) independence superficial and to transform the Palestinian entity into an entity in orbit around Israel, cut off from its surroundings. Its only links with the Arabs and the rest of the world would be those which suit Israel's political

purposes and strategic interests, especially extending the network of Israel's relations into the region."

Already, he said, Israel was trying to dictate the form of economic development in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by offering to act as a channel for international aid.

"We want to form the strongest possible links with

Jordan and with our Arab surroundings since the Palestinian entity should breathe only through Arab lungs," he added.

Palestinian businessmen had agreed to take part in an economic conference in an Arab capital on using the Palestinians' own resources in reconstruction, he said.

Egypt considers gas pipeline to Gaza or Israel

CAIRO (R) — Egypt is considering building a gas pipeline to the Gaza Strip or Israel to export an expected future surplus of natural gas, a senior Egyptian official said Thursday.

The idea is an example of the economic opportunities opening up since Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a peace agreement 12 days ago giving

Palestinians self-rule in Gaza and the West Bank.

Mohammad Al Tayila, vice-president for gas at the state-owned Egyptian General Petroleum Corporation (EGPC), told Reuters that a pipeline to Gaza and possibly Israel was more likely to make commercial sense, given the amount of gas Egypt would be able to export, than a pipeline across the Mediterranean Sea to

Europe.

"It's only 300 kilometres to build a pipeline (to Gaza). We need smaller quantities than (we would do) to put a line under the Mediterranean," he said. "If we have a surplus of 200 to 300 million sources say a pipeline to Gaza, where a new power station is one of many infrastructure projects planned under Palestinian self-rule, could cost between \$200 to

\$300 million.

Egypt has been converting power generating stations from oil to gas to free crude oil for export, and it currently uses all the gas it produces. But gas production is increasing by about 15 per cent a year and a surplus is projected from 1997.

Until now, the two main options considered have been a pipeline under the Mediterra-

nean to Europe and a network of liquefied natural gas plants to make gas transportable by ship.

But the PLO-Israel deal raises the prospects of an open border between Egypt and Gaza for the first time since Israel captured the territory in 1967 and greater economic cooperation between Egypt and Israel.

IMF chief warns of 'devastating' economic trends

WASHINGTON (R) — IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus warned Thursday of the risk of "devastating trends" hitting the world economy and appealed for a global growth strategy to combat them.

Setting the stage for a series of international financial meetings that start Saturday, Mr. Camdessus painted a bleak picture of a world economy beset by high and rising unemployment, anaemic growth and mounting protectionism.

"There are important problems," the International Monetary Fund (IMF) chief told reporters. "Indeed, several of them could become devastating trends if they are not reversed."

He said the answer was a global growth strategy that puts trade liberalisation at the top of the agenda and which includes interest rate cuts and reduced budget deficits in the industrial world.

The IMF had forecast industrial countries will experience only meagre growth of 1.1 per cent this year and 2.2 per cent next year.

Economic policy-makers from more than 175 nations are gathering in Washington for an IMF/World Bank annual meeting that is expected to be dominated by two problems

that refuse to go away — a sagging world economy and a Russia beset by political and economic turmoil.

Mr. Camdessus said he saw no reason to be pessimistic about the outlook for Russia despite the political upheaval there.

But he made clear the IMF would not be lending Moscow any more money until the country puts its economic reforms back on track.

IMF strategy calls for Russia to put its economic house in order by clamping down on credit growth, slashing its huge government budget deficit and opening up its economy.

Mr. Camdessus said the United States and other rich states may want to accelerate their help for Russia to aid Mr. Yeltsin but he stressed IMF loans would be tied to Moscow's progress in reforming its economy.

The IMF chief appealed to the industrial nations to come up with a global growth strategy to put the world economy back on track after four years of sub-par growth.

At the top of that strategy should be an early conclusion of the Uruguay Round of international trade talks. Those talks, aimed at liberalising trade worldwide, had dragged on for seven years.

Algeria adopts liberal investment law

ALGIERS (R) — Algeria has adopted a liberal investment law offering capital transfer guarantees and other incentives to foreigners, the official news agency APS said Thursday.

The law, adopted by a cabinet meeting chaired by head of state Ali Kafi Wednesday, enshrines "freedom of investment as an absolute principle," APS said.

"It suppresses the distinction between public and private investments, and between national and foreign investments," the agency added.

To cut through bureaucratic red tape, all formalities for investment projects will be processed by a one-stop bureau. A Special Investment Promotion Agency called the APSI will also be set up.

The government's bid to attract foreign investment is clearly aimed at boosting an economy suffering from a wave of violence blamed on Muslim fundamentalists.

APS reported that the state will in future intervene in the investment field only through the APSI "for the attribution of incentives in the form of fiscal advantages and other encouragements."

Officials in charge of the economy have said numerous foreign groups considered the absence of an investment code the main obstacle to the influx of foreign capital.

The new text appears more liberal than the investment law prepared by the previous government of prime minister Abdul Salam Belaid which did not exclude the "risk of nationalisation."

Yemen starts official Masila crude exports

ADEN (R) — Yemen formally inaugurated oil exports from a major new producing region Thursday, raising the impoverished country's oil production by two-thirds to around 300,000 barrels per day (b/d).

Yemen, which started producing oil in 1987 from the Marib region, now increases its total output by 120,000 b/d from 10 wells in the new producing region in Masila.

Canada's Occidental Petroleum Ltd. operates the Masila block, a 36,000 square kilometres concession on the

Gulf of Aden coast. Most of Yemen's oil production, fluctuating between 170,000 and 200,000 b/d, had come from fields in the eastern Marib region.

Some 2.25 million barrels have been exported from Masila since July 1 when initial production started. Traders say Masila's relatively low 0.62 per cent sulphur content makes it purer than crude from neighbouring Oman.

They say it serves as a cheap substitute for Omani crude.

India relaxes spending squeeze ahead of polls

BOMBAY (R) — India has relaxed a government spending squeeze before crucial elections in November and December but will rein in the fiscal deficit again after the polls, Finance Minister Manmohan Singh has said.

"This is not an Indian phenomenon but it is a worldwide phenomenon," Mr. Singh said in an interview with the Sunday Times of India. "I think before politicians can become statesmen they would like to be elected."

The central bank warned this month of a sharp slippage in meeting the fiscal deficit target, and cautioned that a revival of inflation could jeopardise the economic reform programme.

But Mr. Singh said the spurt in government spending before the elections would not be inflationary.

He was quoted as saying he was confident of keeping the fiscal deficit to around 5.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), around the same level as last year.

"I would have liked the year to end with a fiscal deficit of 4.7 per cent of GDP, but even

if I now slip by one percentage point it is not a disaster. I don't think it will destroy price stability," he said.

"At present the imbalances are manageable and correcting the imbalance by depressing the economy would be counter-productive," Mr. Singh said. He said there was considerable slack in the economy, particularly in critical sectors like iron and steel and cement.

India has postponed negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on a new loan package of \$7.9 billion for the coming three years until it has the fiscal deficit closer to IMF targets.

Under a previous loan agreement, the IMF had wanted to see a fiscal deficit of not more than 4.7 per cent of GDP this year. But Mr. Singh said it was important to take into account political realities.

Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao's Congress government faces elections in four northern states in November and December when it will be trying to fend off a strong challenge from the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

GPA slashes order book to cement rescue deal

DUBLIN (R) — Debt-ridden GPA Group PLC, the world's biggest aircraft-leasing company, sealed a rescue package with U.S. industrial giant General Electric Thursday requiring a massive \$7.7 billion cut in its order book.

The struggling Shannon-based company, outlining the final shape of a package that took months to cement but averted almost certain collapse, said it was cutting its new aircraft orders by more than three quarters to 57 planes from 242.

"It was like a Rubik's cube. Nothing was agreed until everything was agreed," GPA's Deputy Chairman Maurice Foley told Reuters, referring to the complex web of negotiations.

The order-book agreement would cut GPA's aircraft bill to \$3.6 billion from \$11.3 billion, with aircraft manufacturers Boeing and Airbus Industrie keeping options open to cancel all but six of the 91 aircraft originally due for delivery between 1993 and the year 2000.

underlined the cash problems that pushed GPA into a preliminary arrangement in May in which the U.S. giant agreed to buy aircraft from GPA and acquire the right to a controlling stake in the company.

The deal is the product of more than a year of highly complex negotiations with banks, bondholders and corporate shareholders as well as aircraft manufacturers.

The rescue plan, which will cost up to \$737 million to implement, would go to shareholders for final approval at a special meeting on Oct. 18, GPA said.

GPA has agreed with Boeing to cancel at least 40 new aircraft orders and has options to drop another 44. It also said it was set to cancel a large number of its orders with the European civil aircraft giant Airbus Industrie, keeping options open to cancel all but six of the 91 aircraft originally due for delivery between 1993 and the year 2000.

Taiwan's investment climate ranked world's second best

TAIPEI (Agencies) — Taiwan's investment climate has been rated by the U.S.-based Business Environment Risk Information (BERI) consultancy, despite declining foreign investment on the island, economic officials have said.

BERI, a risk assessment and consulting firm, said in its July report that Taiwan followed only Switzerland in terms of profit potential for the second quarter of this year and next year, the officials said.

But the island's foreign-currency payment capability

dropped from the first quarter to the third rating, trailing that of Japan and Switzerland, they added.

The firm also rated the island, Singapore and Japan the second best places for investment in the next five years, they said.

BERI's optimistic forecast comes despite investment in the island from abroad falling 28 per cent in the first seven months of 1993 to \$550 million amid prohibitive real estate prices, fears of environmental protection sentiment and the lack of infrastructure here.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: State what you want the most in direct terms today and let all concerned know that you have reasons and motives of the highest caliber and show that you are on the beat for putting your plans into execution.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Look at your home from an angle of perfecting conditions there in every possible manner after which you will be able to have much happiness quietly.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A fine Saturday morning to get into whatever correspondence requires your attention and in the evening enjoy the world of outside activity.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Consider what is necessary for you to do in adding to your income or holdings and you make progress during the early day, then bring your talents to the attention of a bigwig.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Go after those personal desires which have been difficult to obtain early in the day, then you will be able to join close comrades at fun games.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A morning to get into whatever private interests that are vital to your well being after which you can have a happy time at home with your family.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Go after those things you

want that are difficult to obtain during the busy week early while later you can handle all kinds of outside interests.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Consider the various public matters awaiting your attention and do them early in the day after which you can fix your surroundings as you wish.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Make appointments early to do those things you wish to do to please yourself early and then carry through in doing them in the afternoon.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get into various interests of yourself and mate and then finish them right away so later you can enjoy members of your household.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Consider well what partners expect from you and please them by doing what they wish while later and you able to be off to see a humorous comrade.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You have interesting work you can conclude in the early part of the day after which an influential man/woman will did you with an outside opportunity.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is the moment for you to have a good time with those you like early in the day after which seek new outlets whereby you can add to your success.

Low oil prices cost OPEC \$6b

GENEVA (AFP) — The drop of oil prices has cost OPEC states about \$6 billion since March, Libyan Energy Minister Abdalla Salem El Badri said here Friday.

Mr. El Badri said after a meeting of the Organisation's compliance committee that the output of 12 OPEC members since March was 200 million barrels above the target.

"We calculated we lost about \$6 billions since March," Mr. El Badri said after the meeting ahead of ministerial talks that open here Saturday.

OPEC officials said the loss was calculated on the basis of the differences in revenue between OPEC's informal target price of \$18 a barrel and its actual price, now about \$15. Mr. El Badri also confirmed

that August output by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) totalled about 24.7 million barrels a day.

"It is not very far from the secondary sources," the Libyan minister said.

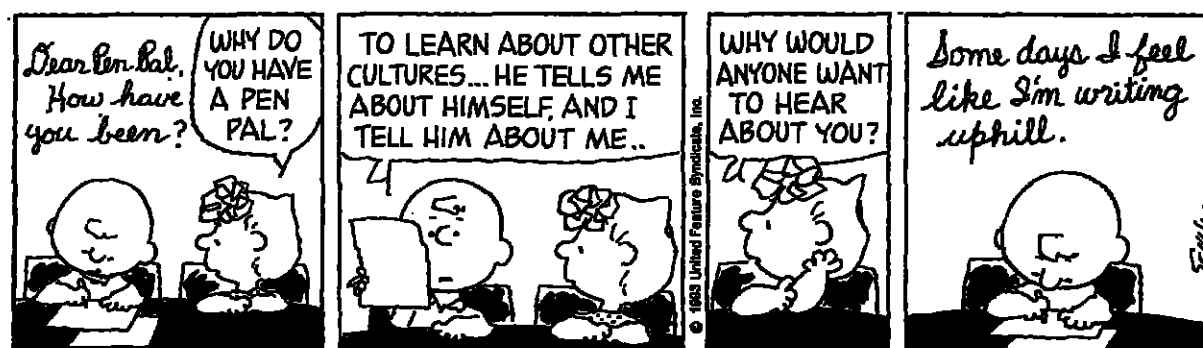
The ministers were to begin formal talks Saturday on the output of crude oil for the fourth quarter.

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"We're going out tonight and we haven't had a fight yet. It's bad luck to go out without fighting first."

Peanuts



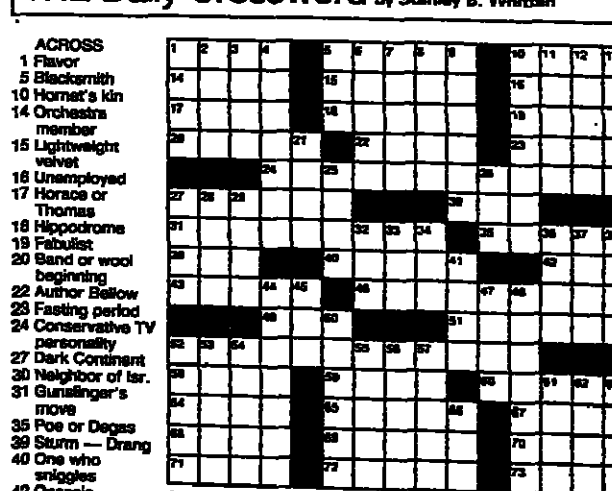
Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



THE Daily Crossword by Stanley B. Whitman



Yesterday's Puzzle Solution:

1. Flavor 2. Blacksmith 3. Horat's kin 4. Orchestra member 5. Lightweight 6. Unemployed 7. Horace or Thomas 8. Hippodrome 9. Fabled 10. Band or wool 11. Beginning 12. Author of 'The Idiot' 13. Fasting period 14. Conservative TV personality 15. Dark Continent 16. Neighbor of Iran 17. Gunlinger's move 18. Poe or Degas 19. Storm - Drang 20. One who arranges 21. Orbits 22. Profitless 23. Driver's ban 24. Expression of discovery 25. Stand in 26. Cane/Fonda 27. Gobi Desert site 28. Gin fizz flavoring 29. Butler 30. 'A' Foreign Affairs 31. Celebrity 32. Carat 33. Facility 34. Judge a case 35. 'The Idiot' 36. 'The Idiot' 37. 'The Idiot' 38. 'The Idiot' 39. 'The Idiot' 40. 'The Idiot' 41. 'The Idiot' 42. 'The Idiot' 43. 'The Idiot' 44. 'The Idiot' 45. 'The Idiot' 46. 'The Idiot' 47. 'The Idiot' 48. 'The Idiot' 49. 'The Idiot' 50. 'The Idiot' 51. 'The Idiot' 52. 'The Idiot' 53. 'The Idiot' 54. 'The Idiot' 55. 'The Idiot' 56. 'The Idiot' 57. 'The Idiot' 58. 'The Idiot' 59. 'The Idiot' 60. 'The Idiot' 61. 'The Idiot' 62. 'The Idiot' 63. 'The Idiot' 64. 'The Idiot' 65. 'The Idiot' 66. 'The Idiot' 67. 'The Idiot' 68. 'The Idiot' 69. 'The Idiot' 70. 'The Idiot' 71. 'The Idiot' 72. 'The Idiot' 73. 'The Idiot'.

Dollar seen reaching DM 1.85 and yen 95

This report is submitted by Nasser Nabulsi, private client group, Merrill Lynch — Dubai

Overview

Fundamental view: A sharp rise in the dollar in response to the political crisis in Russia could be reversed in coming days if Boris Yeltsin prevails. But longer-term business cycle and interest rate trends continue to favour rise in the dollar against European currencies. Japan's larger-than-expected 0.75 per cent cut in its official discount rate may help stabilise or weaken the yen in the near term, but a weak recovery in Japan will do little to curb the nation's huge current account surplus. We maintain our 12-month forecasts for the dollar to reach DM 1.85 and yen 95.

Technical view: The U.S. dollar index fell 0.4 per cent for the week ended September 17. Versus the six currencies we regularly monitor, the green back lost ground against those in Australia, Canada, and Japan. However, it was particularly weak against the latter currency. At this point, sentiment is at or near oversold, readings as put/call ratios are at their most constructive levels in seven months. Short term momentum is quite oversold and appears to be turning up. This, plus the sentiment picture, suggests a good environment for a near term dollar rally. However (and despite the turmoil of recent days), medium term oscillators remain weak and would tend to suggest that any rally that does develop will be counter trend. With the index recently having marginally broken the 91.00-93.00 support band, the technical evidence would suggest that it is likely to fully test the May lows (just above 88.00) in coming weeks.

However, the oversold nature of the short term technical indicators has positioned the index for a test of resistance at 92.00-93.00; a penetration of that range would allow for second resistance above 94.00.

Japanese yen

Fundamental view: The yen weakened to the 106.7 level against the dollar on Sept. 21 in response to Russia's crisis and a larger-than-expected 0.75 per cent cut in Japan's official discount rate to an historic low of 1.75 per cent. We now expect the Bank of Japan to keep monetary policy on hold for an extended period — perhaps six months — as it monitors the response of the economy to recent fiscal and monetary stimulus measures. Further easing next year cannot be ruled out if growth remains weak. The recently announced fiscal stimulus package of 6.15 trillion yen (1.3 per cent of GNP) is expected to have little impact on growth this year and only one half or less than its face value on growth next year. With private credit demand likely to remain weak, it is doubtful that Japan will grow fast enough next year to curb its huge external surplus.

Although the latest discount rate cut and the threat of Bank of

Japan intervention should help the yen stabilise or weaken somewhat in the near term, persistent large current account surpluses should bring renewed upward pressure on the yen in 1994. We maintain our six — and 12-month forecasts for the yen/USD rate of 100 and 95 respectively.

Technical view: The Japanese yen rallied some 1.7 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week, thereby posting the largest week-to-week gain of any of the six currencies we regularly monitor. Sentiment readings for the currency have improved as put/call ratios are oversold and the Consensus Inc. survey is near oversold. Although the dominant long term trend remains up for the currency, medium term momentum oscillators have had a downward bias for several weeks. Thus, even though short term indicators are now constructive, we think that the prospects for currency weakness in coming remain reasonably good. The potential for a test of second support at 110-112, therefore, have improved.

Deutsche mark

Fundamental view: The dollar moved up sharply to the DM 1.64 level on Sept. 21 in response to the political crisis in Russia. The move could be reversed in coming days if Boris Yeltsin prevails in the current power struggle, as we expect. But longer-term economic and interest rate trends continue to favour a stronger dollar against European currencies. We expect the Bundesbank to continue easing monetary policy this November and to bring short-term interest rates down 200 basis points or more over the next twelve months in response to Germany's recession. We view recent hopes that the German economy has bottomed as premature, especially against a backdrop of faltering income growth. We also expect the U.S. to grow at a 3.5 rate in the second half of this year, which should contrast favourably with Germany. We maintain our six — and 12-month forecasts for the DM/USD rate at DM 1.80 and DM 1.85 respectively.

Technical view: The Deutschmark fell 1.1 per cent versus the US dollar last week. However, put/call ratios are now overbought as are medium term sentiment surveys. The negative sentiment picture is bolstered by short term momentum, which was recently at its most overbought level since last September and appears to be reversing to the downside. This tends to support the weakness of the past few days, but the fact that short term oscillators do confirm the recent highs and that medium term momentum remains upwardly biased implies that higher currency highs are still indicated — short term weakness notwithstanding. In addition, the recent rally through 1.62 DM/USD implies that a test of the twin peaks recorded last April and December in the 1.55-1.57 range is increasingly likely.

The reversal in recent days has carried the currency back to the 1.64 breakout point; this should provide important first support, with second support likely near 1.667 mark/yen cross-rate has

held well above the 62-64 trading range — moving to — and has done so with solid short and medium term momentum. While the possibility of a retest of the recent low still exists, probabilities of such a test have weakened. Support in the low 60s appears to be fairly strong. Significant chart resistance remains at 70.

Pound sterling

Fundamental view: The pound weakened against the dollar in recent trading to the U.S./£1.51 level amid Russia's political crisis. We continue to think the fundamentals point to a weaker pound versus the dollar, as U.K. interest rates decline further along other European interest rates. While we look for interest rates in the U.K. to decline by 50 basis points in the near term, they will probably not fall by as much as German rates over the next 12 months. Recessionary conditions in Germany and expectations of further cuts in official German interest rates should be a fundamental force pushing the pound higher against the DM. The pound should also get a boost as the expansion in the U.K. gains momentum.

Recent economic indicators are consistent with around 2 per cent growth this year and we expect real GDP growth to accelerate next year to 3.2 per cent. Based on expectations for lower German interest rates and a growth differential that favours the U.K., we expect the pound to move toward the DM/£12.60 level. But based on our 12-month target rate of DM/£11.85, the pound should weaken further against the dollar to the \$1.41 level.

Technical view: The British pound fell 1.4 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week. Although sentiment is currently viewed as a negative, the recent breakout above a long standing trading range at 1.47-1.52 U.S./£P. (which is now viewed as support) has potentially improved the currency's medium to longer term prospects. At the least, the recent strength to near \$1.56 — confirmed as it was by both short and medium term momentum — implies that this area of resistance will be broken in coming weeks and will pave the way for a challenge of important long term resistance at \$1.585-\$1.60.

If this \$1.015 band is decisively broken, a case can be made that a long term base will then be in place. It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that \$1.60 is as important to the currency as resistance as \$1.40 is to it as support.

Versus the DM, sterling has been weak since late July with the cross-rate moving from its high just below 2.59 to a recent low near important support at 2.45. Short term momentum has not confirmed these lows, allowing for the possibility of a rally back to perhaps 2.52-2.54. However, medium term momentum remains weak, and any such rally will likely be short lived. Lower lows, therefore, are still expected over the medium term — short term strength notwithstanding.

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Croatia tells U.N. peacekeepers to disarm Serbs or pull out

(Agencies) — Aiding dissatisfaction with the U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has insisted that United Nations peacekeepers either disarm Serb rebels holding a third of the republic or pull out.

"We must express our dissatisfaction with Dr. Ghali's report because he is accepting the U.N.'s inability to implement the peace plan," Croatian Foreign Minister Mate Granic told the Croatian parliament Thursday.

The Croatian cabinet decided that unless the mandate of the U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was changed it would not be extended when it expires on Sept. 30, and nearly 10,000 peacekeepers would have to leave by then end of November.

Dr. Ghali said this week that UNPROFOR's mission in Croatia should be extended by six months. The Security Council is expected to uphold his recommendation.

He had rebuffed Zagreb's demand for tough UNPROFOR action to disarm the Serbs — tantamount to turning the peacekeepers into an intervention force — to speed the return of Serb-held land to Croatian sovereignty.

"UNPROFOR has not fulfilled its basic tasks," Mr. Granic said.

"No control has been established in the occupied zones of Croatia, not one expelled Croat has been returned home,

and the heaviest weaponry is still (in Serb) control, used daily for attacks on Croatian towns and villages," he said.

UNPROFOR Commander General Jean Cot said his force would not resist if Croatia did not want its presence: "If one party does not wish us to remain I don't see how we can."

Under pressure from encircling Muslim troops, Croat forces in central Bosnia threatened to cut power supplies to Sarajevo, where the mainly Muslim parliament meets next Tuesday to debate the latest peace plan to end the fighting.

The session was called by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic after shipboard talks in the Adriatic Sea between leaders of the three warring factions and international mediators failed to reach agreement on a peace accord.

A U.N. relief convoy reached the Bosnian city of Mostar Friday and began unloading urgent supplies to both the Croat and Muslim populations, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said.

The nine-truck convoy, only the fourth to reach the city since Aug. 25 due to intense fighting, was carrying 92 tonnes of food and medicine, a UNHCR spokesman told Reuters in Geneva.

Earlier Croatian radio reported heavy fighting in the south-west Bosnia city, where Croats are besieging the Mus-

lim quarter, and this was preventing aid getting through to both sides.

"The convoy got into Mostar today," UNHCR spokesman Fernando Del Mundo said in response to an inquiry. "The shelling eased off today and they are unloading now in both the Croat and Muslim sectors."

He said 51 tonnes of food and medical supplies were being given to the Muslim quarter and 41 tonnes to the Croats.

An international airlift, interrupted for two days earlier this week, also dropped 49.2 tonnes of food and medicine over Mostar Thursday night, according to the UNHCR.

The United Nations said Thursday that the bodies of 66 Serbs, many of them charred and dismembered, had been recovered after a Croatian government army incursion into a rebel Serb enclave.

UNPROFOR Civil Affairs Director Cedric Thornberry said many of the bodies appeared to have been civilians but confirmation was not immediately possible because they were in such dreadful condition.

Serb forces threaten to avenge the grisly harvest from the Sept. 9 Croatian offensive into the Krajina enclave by evicting the last significant ethnic Croat community still living undisturbed there.

UNPROFOR soldiers recovered 14 bodies and the Cro-

atian army returned the rest to the Serbs after handing over the U.N. control three villages seized in a Croatian thrust over a U.N. ceasefire line into Krajina's Medak pocket.

"The corpses were in terrible condition — burned, charred, hacked and so forth," Mr. Thornberry told reporters at UNPROFOR Headquarters in the Croatian capital Zagreb.

He said the Krajina Serb military command believed at least 30 of the bodies were civilians.

UNPROFOR had launched an investigation and would notify humanitarian agencies of the findings.

U.N. officials say Croatian forces razed most buildings in the villages before withdrawing from the fringes of the mountainous enclave near the Adriatic coast.

Two British and a French soldier, serving with the UNPROFOR, have been wounded in separate incidents in central Bosnia and Sarajevo, an UNPROFOR spokesman said Friday.

Two Britons were hit by shrapnel from a mortar round Thursday as they monitored fighting between Bosnian Croat and government forces near Dubravica, in the centre of the republic, Lieutenant-Colonel Bill Aikman told a news briefing.

One of the men was slightly injured in the arm, the other received a severe wound to the neck, he said.

Shevardnadze counts hours till Sukhumi siege ends

TBILISI, Georgia (Agencies) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze said government troops were breaking through separatist Abkhazian military positions and could end a rebel siege of the local capital, Sukhumi, within hours.

"We need a few more hours before our forces come in from the east and arrive in town," the Georgian leader told local television from Sukhumi, in an upbeat assessment of the military situation, late Thursday.

Three Georgian airliners have been destroyed in three days as government forces and rebels battled over the Black Sea port. The attacks have cost dozens of lives and put in doubt the remaining link between Sukhumi and Georgian hinterland.

Mr. Shevardnadze, personally heading resistance against the week-long rebel attack on Sukhumi, has denounced the attacks as "unprecedented acts of vandalism."

Abkhazian rebel officials, contacted by telephone from

Moscow, said Sukhumi was now cut off from sea, land and air supply routes. The Georgian military had been prevented from bringing in supplies, they said.

But a defiant Shevardnadze said Georgian forces had begun clearing the outskirts of Sukhumi of rebel forces.

"These cleaning up operations in the town are going on successfully. (Abkhazian) bands are being liquidated," he said, adding that there were casualties on both sides.

Although the airport had been closed and telephone lines cut, the former Soviet foreign minister said: "The most important thing is there has been a turning point in our operation."

Mr. Shevardnadze said earlier that troop reinforcements had boosted the city's defences and Georgian forces were breaking through the rebel blockade from the direction of Ochamchira, 60 kilometres to the southeast.

"Our forces are showing full battle-readiness. They are

pushing ahead successfully from Ochamchira and getting ever closer to Sukhumi," he said in remarks made on a military radio link and broadcast on national radio.

Defence Ministry officials in Tbilisi said Georgian forces pushing towards Sukhumi were having to fight all the way. But they said Georgian forces had taken the key villages of Akhaldava and Adzhubza, on the way towards the capital.

Reopening a land supply route to Ochamchira would be a breakthrough for the Georgians, who have suffered cruelly from a lack of tanks and artillery.

A spokesman for the secessionist side, reached by telephone in the rebel stronghold of Gudauta, said the Abkhazians now controlled the hills above the Black Sea city and its defenders were at the mercy of their artillery.

"The Georgians now have no reason to continue to resist," the spokesman quoted the Abkhaz "defence minister", Sultan Sosnaliyev, as

saying.

The Abkhazians, who launched an offensive against Sukhumi on Sept. 16, shattering a Russian-brokered ceasefire, have said they will provide a land corridor for Georgian forces to withdraw if they surrender.

Meanwhile, former Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, driven from power in January 1992, arrived by plane at the military airport of Senaki in southwest Georgia, supporters contacted by telephone from Tbilisi said Friday.

They said he was to go Saturday to Zugdidi, in his stronghold of the Mingrelia region of Georgia.

His return to the country came as forces of Mr. Shevardnadze continued to battle separatists in Sukhumi.

Mr. Gamsakhurdia, elected head of state of Georgia in May 1991, seven months before the Soviet Union disintegrated, fled the republic in January 1992 after a short civil war.

Sihanouk ascends Cambodian throne

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's Norodom Sihanouk signed a new constitution and became king Friday in elaborate ceremonies replete with conch shell horns, roost pig head offerings and a multi-tiered royal umbrella.

King Sihanouk's first act was to name his son, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, and the former Communist Premier Hun Sen, as the two co-prime ministers of the newly sovereign Kingdom of Cambodia, ending the U.N. peacekeeping mandate.

"From now on, Cambodia will have stability," Prince Ranariddh said.

The crown and royal sword were stolen during the Communist Khmer Rouge's ruthless reign in Cambodia, so King Sihanouk chose to have the multi-tiered royal umbrella suspended over the gilded throne adorned with fruit, candles and other offerings to Buddha — as the symbol of the monarchy.

King Sihanouk did not physically sit on the throne, but instead placed sacred banyan tree leaves behind his left ear to signify his ascension.

"I swear I will follow the constitution and all the laws of the kingdom, and take all actions in the interests of its

citizens," the 70-year-old former prince, who was ascending the throne for the second time in his life, told the holy witnesses, U.N. officials, members of the National Assembly and the diplomatic corps assembled in the throne hall of the royal palace.

The Cambodians all wore traditional white tunics, black stockings and knicker-style pants made of purple silk.

The radical Khmer Rouge, who have been waiting on the fringes of the Cambodian political scene threatening to mount another civil war, are the only problem remaining to be solved in Cambodia, King Sihanouk said. He will chair a round-table discussion to decide their fate in November.

"We are going to do our best to resolve that problem," he said. "It remains the only problem."

The king took the throne shortly after the Throne Council, set up by the constitution he signed in a morning ceremony, voted unanimously to make him king.

Prince Ranariddh, one of the seven members of the council, sought to allay fears the king would have too much power.

"A lot of people are afraid

my father will do like before," Prince Ranariddh, in reference to the 1960s when the autocratic King Sihanouk ruled without tolerance to opposition, told reporters following the council's decision.

"The fact is, you have to study our constitution, and you will find it very democratic, very liberal," he said.

The promulgation of the constitution and naming of Prince Ranariddh and Mr. Hun Sen as co-premiers officially ended the U.N. mandate in Cambodia.

They immediately took their oaths of office in front of the crowd, following the sounding of conch-shell horns and the sacred gong held by two elephant tusks, and offerings to Buddha of roost pigs heads, ducks, fruits and incense.

Speaking earlier before a crowd of 4,000 on the grassy lawn in front of the royal palace, the Cambodian leader had called the constitution a "masterpiece" of democracy.

"It is indisputable that as of today, our beloved Cambodia and people possess the most liberal constitution which places our country in the banks of the most authentically democratic countries of the world," he said.

Mrs. Marcos convicted, sentenced to jail

MANILA (AP) — Imelda Marcos, who became an international symbol of extravagance during her husband's long reign over the Philippines, was convicted of corruption Friday and sentenced to at least 18 years in prison.

The Philippine court also barred Mrs. Marcos — a one-time presidential candidate who still enjoys a large following here — from ever holding public office.

It was the first time any court has convicted the widow of former leader Ferdinand Marcos on a crime connected with the corruption during her husband's 20 years in office.

estimated \$10 billion it says was embezzled during his rule.

"The verdict just goes to show that the justice system in the Philippines is working," deputy presidential press Secretary Honesto Isla said.

Senior prosecutor Antonio Disierto said the conviction "should serve as a very strong deterrent against any high government official who may use his position to promote interests."

Mrs. Marcos and former Transport Minister Jose Dans were found guilty of two charges of entering into "unfavourable" contracts involving the government-run commuter rail line and the Philippine General Hospital Founda-

tion Inc.

They were sentenced to nine to 12 years for each charge and must serve at least 18 years, court officials said. Both are free on bail, and Mrs. Marcos' lawyer said she would appeal.

Mrs. Marcos clutched a black rosary and bowed her head slightly as the clerk of the three-judge Sandiganbayan Court, which tries official corruption cases, read the verdict to a courtroom packed with supporters and journalists.

About 150 supporters, wearing red shirts and carrying placards reading "Imelda Marcos not guilty," surged forward toward the gates of the court when they heard the verdict over a loudspeaker.

Buthelezi calls on Zulus to fight TEC

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi called Friday on Zulus to fight the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) adopted by the South African parliament to give blacks a say for the first time in running the government.

The leader of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) told a rally north of Durban that the TEC, voted Thursday in Cape Town, would allow "foreigners" to rule his KwaZulu homeland.

The TEC bill establishes multi-party councils to oversee government in the run-up to South Africa's first non-racial poll, scheduled for April 27.

Mr. Buthelezi has said the IFP will not participate in the TEC, which is expected to be dominated by the IFP's bitter rival, the African National Congress (ANC), and President F. W. de Klerk's National Party (NP).

In terms of the legislation, the TEC will be empowered to ensure a level political playing field throughout South Africa, including KwaZulu.

"If we allow the TEC to take over the running of KwaZulu, then we are saying it is okay to allow foreigners to rule over us," Mr. Buthelezi said. "This is no patriotic Zulu can ever allow."

"We must be prepared to fight for our freedom and the right to rule over ourselves," he said.

Meanwhile, the ANC and the white right-wing Afrikaner Volksfront (AVF) said Friday they had held "encouraging" discussions over their vastly different visions for a future South Africa.



A general view of leaders and deputies of the 10 former Soviet republics at the start of the

Commonwealth of Independent States summit in Moscow Friday (AFP photo)

Yeltsin thanks CIS leaders for support; vows to maintain order

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin thanked CIS leaders gathered at a summit Friday for their "support and solidarity" in his stand-off with Russia's hardline parliament and vowed to maintain public order, ITAR-TASS News Agency said.

The heads from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) had gone ahead with a meeting at the Kremlin to create an economic union despite the tension in Moscow triggered by Mr. Yeltsin's dissolution of the conservative legislature Tuesday.

During Friday's session, Azerbaijan became an official member of the Commonwealth when its president, Geidar Aliyev, signed the CIS treaty at a Kremlin ceremony, the agency said.

"Although truly unusual measures have been taken in recent days, I assure you that public order will be maintained in Moscow and in Russia," he told heads of the former Soviet republics.

"Do not worry," said Mr. Yeltsin. Earlier Friday, he had ordered security forces to disarm his opponents as the government increased pressure on members of the renegade

legislature to abandon the parliament building where they voted in an emergency night session to impeach Mr. Yeltsin.

The president thanked the leaders for their "solidarity and support for the measures taken recently to protect the ideals of democracy and civil peace in Russia," ITAR-TASS said.

Leaders from all the CIS nations have supported Mr. Yeltsin's decision to dissolve the legislature, dominated by former Communists, and call general elections in December.

Mr. Yeltsin said the CIS meeting Friday was of "critical importance" and demonstrated the "will to move forward together on the road towards reforms and to strengthen the commonwealth."

ITAR-TASS meanwhile said that nine of the CIS heads had initiated an agreement in principle to create an economic union. The CIS heads of state were expected to sign it at the Kremlin later Friday.

The CIS leaders from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, were meeting behind closed doors at

the Kremlin.

Leaders from Moldova — whose parliament has refused to ratify membership of the CIS — were also present. Georgia, which up to now has refused to join the CIS, was attending as an observer.

A member of the Russian Governmental Committee for Relations With the CIS was quoted as saying that Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan had initiated the economic agreement.

The most independent-minded republics, Turkmenistan and Ukraine, were planning to become associate members of the economic union, the source said.

None of the participants has said he would meet Russian Vice President Alexander Rutskoi, who was named acting president by the parliament in a bid to set up a parallel government.

The economic situation in all the former Soviet republics has deteriorated seriously since the breakup of the Soviet Union and many members have become heavily indebted to Moscow.

Gorbachev renews attack on Yeltsin

ROME (Agencies) — Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev renewed his criticism of Russian President Boris Yeltsin Friday as he boarded a plane here cutting short a visit to Italy in order to return to Moscow.

He told reporters that the negative process launched by Mr. Yeltsin had to be halted. On Wednesday, announcing that he would leave Italy after six days instead of the eight programmed, he described Mr. Yeltsin's decision the day before to dissolve the Russian parliament on the grounds of obstructionism as "senseless and unconstitutional."

Meetings with Pope John Paul II and Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro scheduled for Friday were moved forward to Thursday.

He warned then: "I am very worried about what is happening in Russia, because instead of moving forward towards democracy, we are in the middle of setting a dangerous and negative precedent, in which we can toss aside the constitution any time we like."

Mr. Gorbachev has accused Mr. Yeltsin of planning to rig elections set for December.

"Yeltsin will have all the finances and the media under his control," he told reporters. "How can elections be fair in such circumstances? It's bad for democracy..."

The promise of also holding presidential elections in June 1994 was not enough, Mr. Gorbachev added.

Mr. Gorbachev has also said the dissolution could lead to a dangerous split in the armed forces and has appealed for

calm.

Although Mr. Gorbachev insists he has no ambition to return to power, he received a public endorsement Thursday from the head of what was once the West's biggest Communist Party as a possible alternative leader for Russia.

Achille Occhetto, head of Italy's renamed Democratic Party of the Left (PDS), hailed Mr. Gorbachev as a great reformer and said it would be a pity to lose the contribution of such a man at a moment when Russia was torn between two extreme positions.

At present, the advocates of capitalism and "those who want the return of the old Stalinist apparatus" were fighting over Russia, Mr. Occhetto said.

But the victory of the former Communists in last weekend's Polish general elections showed those who only believed in the savage laws of the market were doomed.

"These events justify the ideas of Gorbachev and the Democratic Left," Mr. Occhetto said.

"I wish him success in his battle and hope he will go a long way in Russia," the Italian opposition leader said.

Meanwhile, officers of the Black Sea Fleet, who backed the failed conspirators in the 1991 Kremlin coup, are playing a waiting game in the latest power struggle in Moscow, a top naval official said.

Colonel Andrei Grachev, the fleet's spokesman, said officers were hedging their bets to ensure they did not again back the wrong side in the struggle pitting Russian Presi-

dent Boris Yeltsin against his rebel vice-president.

"The situation is difficult. The vast majority of officers are adopting 'wait-and-see' tactics and offering no opinions," he told Reuters by telephone from the fleet's headquarters in Sevastopol.

"This reflects the experience of the August coup. At that time, the fleet became a hostage to the political battles in Moscow. The positions now are double-edged."

Grachev said the fleet was operating normally, subordinate to the presidents of both Ukraine and Russia pending the transfer to Russian jurisdiction as the two leaders agreed in principle earlier this month.

Formally, he said, the fleet did not recognise Russian Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi's claim to the presidency after Mr. Yeltsin dissolved the country's parliament Tuesday.

In Kiev, Defence Minister Kostyantyn Morozov also said Ukraine did not recognise Mr. Yeltsin's conservative rivals. But he said the former Soviet republic had to strengthen its borders.

"I do not believe there are two defence ministers in Russia. I know only of Pavel Grachev," Mr. Morozov said after welcoming British Defence Secretary Malcolm Rifkind to Kiev.

"But the situation in Russia is dangerous. I have always said we must strengthen our borders and be prepared to defend our country regardless of events in neighbouring states."

Clinton presses blitz for health plan

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton and his cabinet Thursday threw themselves into a public relations blitz promoting a U.S. health care reform scheme that is drawing fire from major insurance and drug companies.

Democrats and Republicans alike commanded Mr. Clinton for getting the health care debate off to a good start with an impassioned speech to a joint session of Congress Wednesday.

But there was also plenty of criticism from both parties for the president's proposal to guarantee every American a comprehensive package of medical benefits "that can never be taken away."

Mr. Clinton was due to play host to a pep rally on the White House back lawn at mid-

afternoon for 2,000 people involved in the health care process using the momentum created by his nationally televised speech to step up a publicity crusade begun about a week ago.

He was then due to fly to Tampa, Florida, for an evening town meeting being televised countrywide.

Cabinet officers fanned out across the country to try to convince Americans Mr. Clinton's proposals are worthwhile. Early public opinion polls showed the president had struck a chord with Americans.

An ABC-Washington Post telephone poll conducted just after the speech found 56 per cent three days earlier, while 24 per cent disapproved. The rest said they had no opinion.

couldn't have hoped for a better day," said White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers.

But there was plenty of grumbling in political circles to signal Mr. Clinton's proposal to create America's first mandatory universal health care system will face plenty of challenges and proposed changes as it grinds through a long legislative process.

Mr. Clinton has yet to give specifics of the financing of his proposal. He said Wednesday that increased taxes on tobacco products, savings in Federal Medicare and Medicaid health care programmes for the elderly and poor and elimination of fraud and abuse would pay for whatever is not financed by employer and employee premium payments.

Man with no flight training crash-lands plane

PHOENIX (AP) — Matthew Kornblum had sat in at the controls of an airplane before, but never at night and never with the pilot unconscious. On Thursday, he found himself in that position, and walked away from a crash landing. "Definitely an E ticket ride," the 34-year-old said, referring to the pass Disneyworld used to sell for its most exciting attractions. "It's just something you have to do when you're in a do-or-die situation." Mr. Kornblum flew the Cessna 182, a four-seater, for about 15 minutes after the pilot had a fatal seizure, and brought the plane into Flagstaff's Pulliam Airport without benefit of runway lights or help from the tower, which was closed at the time. Mr. Kornblum, an electrical engineer from Charlotte, N.C., has never had a flying lesson but said Mr. Graham and other pilots have allowed him to take the controls several times. "I've had maybe 10 hours at the stick," Mr. Kornblum said. "I'm really glad I've paid attention." Mr. Kornblum and 59-year-old Billy Graham were returning to Flagstaff from a business trip to Kayenta, about 130 miles (210 km) away, when Graham convulsed and passed out. Mr. Kornblum said. He propped Graham up and took over the controls.

Sex offender seeks castration; doctors refuse

LONDON (AFP) — A 59-year-old mental patient who admits sexually abusing children since his adolescence is on a hunger strike seeking castration, but doctors and lawyers disagree on the legality of such surgery. According to the case outlined in the British Medical Journal (BMJ), the man identified as only Mr. X says he cannot control his behaviour and would continue to abuse children unless castrated. He has threatened to castrate himself, as well as to commit suicide, and is currently on a hunger strike in a mental hospital to force doctors to perform the operation. Doctors at the hospital have proposed chemical castration — drugs which block production of the male hormone testosterone and thus reduce or eliminate his sex drive. But he has refused, saying the solution would not be permanent, according to the article. Mr. X began abusing children when he was in school, and continued after his marriage when he molested his own children, said the article. He was imprisoned several times, for up to 10 years, but continued the abuse each time he was released, it said. Doctors are reticent about castrating him, claiming British law is vague on the subject and that they could be accused of assault, said the BMJ. If they refuse, however, they could be held liable for any future offenses he commits.

Sculpture gets its due

WASHINGTON (AP) — For years, she was perched way up high, in a niche over a doorway in the U.S. embassy in Rome. Dust and grime had settled into her pores and those who saw her were too far away to notice the sweetness of her smile or the sensuous curve of her back. Now the Cesareni Venus, a divine marble nude by the 16th century Medici court sculptor Giambologna, is getting her moment in the light. She goes on display Sunday in the National Gallery of Art after months of loving restoration. In the centre of a large, airy gallery, she now glows — a delicate, smaller-than-life goddess, nonchalantly drying herself after a bath. Her surface, once soiled by centuries-old bird droppings and rust, is now milky white. There is room to walk around her and see her from all sides — something Giambologna must have intended. "The experience of the real thing is astonishing," said Anthony Radcliffe, keeper emeritus of London's Victoria and Albert Museum and a Giambologna scholar. "This is the moment in which it actually takes its place in art history." The statue is one of the last efforts of the Flemish-born sculptor, who went to Italy for training and never returned. He spent his career trying to capture the female nude, and the Venus is thought to be his finest effort.

Al Jazireh crowned women's basketball champions

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Al Jazireh Thursday proved that their recent win over titleholders Al Orthodoxi was no mistake, when they scored a most precious 65-59 victory to clinch the women's basketball title ending an undisputed 3-year reign by Al Orthodoxi.

It was a tense game for both teams, especially in the first half, but Al Orthodoxi's players felt greater pressure as they had to win by over 7 points to retain the title. (Al Jazireh had won the first round match 65-58).

Al Orthodoxi, who had become accustomed to defeating all teams by a minimum margin of 20 points, this year learned, the hard way, that nothing can be taken for granted.

Although Al Orthodoxi led throughout most of the first half, Al Jazireh were too determined to add the women's title to the under-14 and under-16 titles of the boys' team. Despite Al Orthodoxi's Lara Masri-Al Naber's admirable efforts to score and assist her teammates, Al Jazireh proved that "practice makes perfect" as they took home the Kingdom's 1993 women's basketball title.

The titleholders led 14-11 after 9 consecutive points by Masri-Al Naber.



The new champions — Al Jazireh

Al Jazireh's Tamara Al Khadra sank in a three-point shot but Al Orthodoxi kept their lead at 18-14. Masri-Al Naber again scored another 9 consecutive points to expand her team's lead to 27-20. Meanwhile Al Jazireh regained their concentration as Suhair Al Mackusi, Rana Al Hussein, and Rania Al Dajani scored, but Al Orthodoxi still led 31-25 before winning the first half 34-32.

Al Jazireh's Hussein and Dajani scored to give their team its first lead at 37-34 at the beginning of the second half when they also adapted

a tighter defence of the zone area, to secure defensive as well as offensive rebounding. This effectively hindered any scoring attempts by Al Orthodoxi whose scoring was limited to Jihan Abdul Noor while Masri-Al Naber was given a rest.

Al Jazireh scored a three-point shot by Dajani and Juma Al Sali added a score to give her team a 47-43 lead. Team Captain Tala Al Mauge assisted her teammates through screens and rebounding while Al Orthodoxi's Abdul Noor scored 4 consecutive points, but Al

Jazireh still led 50-47.

The turning point in the game came after the 8th minute as Al Orthodoxi's shots lacked accurate finishing. Al Jazireh took advantage of this to outscore their opponents 11-2, depending on teamwork to take a commanding 61-49 lead.

The 1992 titleholders seemed to give up and team captain Masri-Al Naber again carried the burden of scoring to narrow the gap but Al Jazireh had already secured a wide lead and went on to win the match 68-59.

Al Ahli finished third after defeating Abu Nusair 78-33 (35-16).

Al Jazireh had first joined the women's competition in 1991 when they finished third after Homentmen, Ahli and Orthodoxi. They clinched third place from Homentmen last year. Homentmen missed the competition this year because of the absence of many of their players, while a new team, Abu Nusair joined the competition.

The Jordan Basketball Federation (JBF) announced the regrouping of the women's national team back in January. Women's teams now hope that the competition not be confined to the once-a-year two-week-long championship, and that the national team soon begins training to prepare for upcoming regional competitions.

FINAL STANDINGS

	W	L	PF	SA	Pts
Jazireh	6	-	444	189	12
Orthodoxi	4	2	475	227	10
Ahli	2	4	282	300	8
Abu Nusair	-	6	87	572	6

Bint Nouranieh, Jerash

"supreme champions" at Arabian Horse Show

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 4th Arabian Horse festival concluded Friday with Bint Nouranieh and Jerash winning the titles of Middle East Supreme Champions.

Bint Nouranieh is owned by Qatar's Sheikh Nawaf Ben Nasser Al Thani while Jerash is owned by Her Royal Highness Princess Zein Bint Al Hussein.

Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein attended Friday's activities, along with Prince Hashem, Princesses Zein, Raya, and Iman, Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad and Princess Rahmah Bint Al Hassan.

Over 200 horse lovers also attended the final day of the horse show, held as part of the 4th annual Arabian Horse Festival which also included the 2nd Middle East Championship.

The 5-day festival also included a judging course, a course in natural therapy, in addition to the Kingdom's first race fielding purebred Arabian horses.

One of the main aims of



Princess Alia Bint Al Hussein

1st place: Bint Nouranieh, owned by Sheikh Nawaf of Qatar.

2nd place: Anasheed, owned by Qatar's Al Shaqab Stud.

Class 10 Mares foaled 1982-1988

1st place: Taifah, owned by Qatar's Sheikh Nawaf

2nd place: Countess Crystal, owned by Jordan's Jaafar Stud

Class 11 Mares foaled before 1982

1st place: A.K. Fanniya, owned by H. Al Nakheeb of Jordan

2nd place: Carazina, owned by Jordan's S. Kheir.

Class 12 stallions foaled in 1989

1st place: Jood, owned by Royal Jordanian State Stud

2nd place: R.A. Tarinka, owned by M. Nabeiwat of Jordan

Class 13 stallions foaled 1986-1988

1st place: Inuran, owned by Inuran Stud of Jordan

2nd place: Hilal El Eid, owned by Royal Jordanian State Stud

Class 14 stallions foaled in 1981-1985

1st place: Jerash, owned by Princess Zein Bint Al Hussein

2nd place: Imperial Injah, owned by Qatar's Sheikh Nawaf

holding the festival is to give horsebreeders an opportunity to qualify their Arabian horses to take part in international competitions.

Results in Thursday's and Friday's shows:

Class 8 Mares foaled in 1989:

1st place: Ms. Elvira, owned by Qatar's Sheikh Nawaf Bin Nasser Al Thani

2nd place: Hameedah, owned by Royal Jordanian State Stud.

Class 9 Mares foaled 1986-1988

Agassi to open U.S. Davis Cup qualifier

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina (R) — Andre Agassi will get the ball rolling for the United States Friday as the heavily favoured Americans take on overmatched Bahamas in their bid to remain in the Davis Cup world group.

Thursday's draw determined that Davis Cup veteran Agassi will play the first singles match against 191st-ranked Roger Smith and the American knows the stakes are high for the U.S. team. "There is really no excuse in the world for us to even be where we are now and certainly to be anything further down would be really an embarrassment," Agassi said following the draw ceremony.

Sydney win 2000 Olympics

MONTE CARLO (R) — Sydney beat Beijing by just two votes of Thursday night after a dramatic contest to stage the 2000 Olympics Games.

But in the moments just before International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Juan Antonio Samaranch announced the decision to a global television audience many Chinese thought their capital had been chosen.

Their confusion stemmed from the fact that Samaranch opened his remarks by reading out the five competing cities in English in alphabetical order and named Beijing first. The other contenders were Berlin, Istanbul and Manchester, which all went out in the first round of voting.

The crowd at the official Olympic gala in Beijing cheered and waved flags when they thought they had won. The crowd of about 1,400 in a plush convention centre went wild, smoke machines poured out mist and a lion dance was performed to the sound of fierce rackets.

But the mistake became clear as the giant television screen in the centre showed scenes of crowds revelling in Sydney.

In Sydney, early Friday night turned into day on the waterfront — with the famous Opera House as a backdrop — as fireworks exploded in celebration just seconds after the IOC announced its 45-43 vote.

Police said crowds swelled to 60,000 when the announcement came across giant television screens at 28 a.m. Friday (1828 GMT Thursday).

A roar of delight echoed around Sydney Harbour and young Australians danced with abandon.

Australian IOC member Phil Coles said in Monte Carlo the ballot had gone to four rounds of voting — the maximum possible with five candidates — Berlin, Istanbul and Manchester were the others — in the race.

"I'm flabbergasted, it's fantastic, it was very close, we went right down to the final round of voting," Coles said.

Australian National Olympic Committee President John Coates said in Monte Carlo that Sydney had first trailed Beijing, adding: "But we won on technical merit,



Sydney Mayor Frank Sartor (centre) and IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch sign the documents naming Sydney host to the 2000 Olympics (AFP photo)



Sydney Mayor Frank Sartor (centre) and IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch sign the documents naming Sydney host to the 2000 Olympics (AFP photo)

which I always thought we would."

As members of the Sydney delegation exploded with joy, the Beijing delegation looked dumbstruck and left without speaking.

Wei Jizhong, secretary-general of the Beijing bid committee, said later: "I'm very disappointed, but I'd like to congratulate Sydney." Asked if China had not invested too much national pride in its bid, he said: "I think the other side did the same."

Australian Prime minister Paul Keating was in Monaco to share the Sydney delegation's moment of triumph. "Australia won tonight,

that's the most important thing. This should be a great confidence-builder for Australia. It shows we can back it in the big swim," said Keating.

The night of China's propaganda machine, backed by a population of 1.2 billion, had installed Beijing as favourites ahead of Sydney in the week before the IOC vote.

But the IOC chose to live up to its own ideals of putting the athletes first by awarding the games to Sydney — the city with unquestionably the best facilities.

A vote for Beijing would have been the biggest gamble ever taken by the IOC and would have resulted in argu-

ably the most difficult seven years in the century since the modern Olympic movement was founded.

Beijing had gone all-out in the run-up to the vote to counter opposition to its bid by U.S. and European politicians.

But the release of political prisoners, a promise to allow a foreign inquiry team to investigate human rights conditions, a short-lived threat to boycott the Atlanta Games in 1996 and even a spate of world records by Chinese runners all failed to win over the IOC.

The IOC decision was welcomed by human rights lobbyists in Monte Carlo. Richard Dicker, spokesman for the U.S. based Human Rights Watch, said: "This decision puts the Chinese leadership on notice that they will pay a price for the continued abuse of their own citizens."

"Until they cease widespread torture, arbitrary imprisonment and religious persecution, the Chinese government will be denied the international approbation they seek," he added.

Almost as if he knew the outcome in advance, Australian IOC Vice-President Kevin Gosper was grinning broadly when he was introduced at the hour-long announcement ceremony at the Louis II Stadium in Monte Carlo.

Kasparov impressed with Short in 8th game

LONDON (R) — World chess champion Garry Kasparov confessed that he had escaped from a seemingly lost position Thursday in the eighth game of his title defence against brilliant play from British challenger Nigel Short.

The players were in agreement that Short, playing white, missed at least two chances to score his first win of the event. Kasparov, 30, leads the 24-game series 6-2 after four wins and four draws and needs only a 12-12 tie to retain the crown.

For the fourth time in a row when playing these colours,

the opening was the mutually dangerous Najdorf Variation of the Sicilian Defence.

Kasparov replied to Short's obvious aggression with a provocative stance that forced the challenger to choose between many tempting but risky ways to sacrifice materials for a possible mating attack.

Short, 28, set the stage for what experts agreed was one of the most exciting title games in memory by sacrificing two rooks — one of the strongest pieces on the board — in order to smoke out and hunt the champion's king.

Even Kasparov was enthusiastic about the daring and imagination of Short's sacrificial attack.

"It was great, it was absolutely great," Kasparov told a press conference after the game, obviously pleased by the

intensity of the game.

"Short found all the right sacrifices and suddenly I understood I was lost. I thought it was going to be an immortal game, with me on the wrong side of the table," Kasparov added.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

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Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♠ K J

♥ A 3

♦ K 10 9 8 7

♣ 6 5 4 2

WEST

♠ 10 9 8 6 3

♥ J 9 4

♦ A 5 2

♣ 9 3

looked like a cakewalk, since the combined count was at least 27 high-card points.

West's ten of spades lead was covered by the jack and queen and ducked by declarer. The spade return went to dummy's king, and a diamond was led to declarer's queen.

West took the ace and cleared spades. Although the finesse for the jack of diamonds lost, West had no entry to the two good spades and declarer coasted home.

There is no guarantee the defenders can defeat the contract, but look at what might happen should West smoothly hold up the ace of diamonds, allowing declarer's queen to win. When declarer continues with a diamond, West plays low once more.

Looking at all the hands, it's easy to see that South can collect an overtrick by rising with the king of diamonds, but that is an unlikely play. To protect against jack-third in the West hand, declarer will almost surely finesse, losing to East's jack. East forces out declarer's last spade stopper and, since there's no way to make nine tricks without letting West gain the lead, the contract must go down.

The auction was a case of simple addition. With 11 points and a five-card suit, North was not interested in anything more than game. That

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EC optimistic over peace process, ready to extend aid, technical help

Claes to raise Jordan's concerns at conference

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The European Community (EC) is optimistic that the Israeli-Palestinian agreement on interim autonomy will lead to peace in the Middle East on the basis of U.N. resolutions and the community stands ready to extend financial and technical assistance to ensure the success of Arab-Israeli peace accords, Belgian Foreign Minister Willy Claes said Thursday.

Mr. Claes was addressing a press conference late Thursday before his departure after talks with Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Tala Al Hassan on the 23-month-old peace process.

An expected meeting between His Majesty King Hussein or His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan with Mr. Claes failed to materialise, but sources said the minister had arrived later than scheduled in Amman and there was little time for such meetings.

The minister, whose visit was arranged at short notice, did not refer to any new programmes of assistance to Jordan. He said the EC was taking note of Jordan's concerns and would seek to address them at a meeting of international donors to be held in Washington on Oct. 1.

Mr. Claes said the EC Commission had already proposed a 500 million European currency units (about \$600 million), five-year aid package to support the Palestinian entity envisaged under the Sept. 13 agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO). He also recalled that the community had provided aid worth around \$1.3 billion to the Palestinians in the last 20 years.

"I am leaving with moderate and prudent optimism" over the course of the peace process, said Mr. Claes, who arrived here after talks in Damascus with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaf.

The Belgian minister, whose country took over the rotating six-month presidency of the EC in July, welcomed the "pragmatic" approach of Jordan.

"I believe that there is a real perspective here for a real comprehensive peace in the near future," he said. "The implementation of the agreements will be a little bit complicated, needing at times contacts between Israel and the PLO, Israel and the Palestinians, and (among) Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians."

"I think that the Jordanian authorities have a more pragmatic approach," he said. "I prefer this approach. I don't believe that it is necessary to finalise the peace process before starting discussions on programmes in a regional framework."

"I think that this approach can help us in order to create a better atmosphere which will stimulate the different actors and partners in the peace process."

Mr. Claes said Dr. Majali had raised Jordan's quest for compensation for hosting Palestinian refugees for decades and that he would discuss the issue with his EC colleagues and at the donors conference on Oct. 1 "to see what can be done towards the refugees and towards Jordan (with) the responsibility for one million refugees."

"Indeed it is a very important and at the same time very complicated story," he said, expressing appreciation of the fact that Jordan had extended full citizenship rights to most of the Palestinians forced out of their homes in the 1948 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars.

Mr. Claes said an EC delegation which visited the oil-rich Arab Gulf states last week to encourage them to give aid to support the peace process found that the countries had a "positive reaction to the Israeli-PLO accord as well as the Jordan-Israeli agenda."

"In general, the Gulf countries confirmed that they will shoulder their share in the im-

plementation of the accords, he said.

Mr. Claes, who attended the signing of the Israel-PLO agreement in Washington and later met with PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, reaffirmed the EC's enthusiastic support for the accord — "the beginning of a new period for the Palestinians."

The minister said the EC had taken note of the reservations voiced by some Arab countries over the accord, but that the community did not believe that the PLO intended to weaken the position of its Arab partners in the peace process by resorting to the "secret diplomacy" that went into producing the agreement with the Jewish state.

"Time was playing against the Palestinians and the PLO," he said. "Now we see that this agreement is (accelerating) the peace process, he said, referring to the Jordan-Israeli agenda signed one day after the Israel-PLO accord."

"Something is going on in the Maghreb... we are going to hear about in the following weeks," said Mr. Claes, in an obvious reference to contacts between Morocco and Israel amid reports that the two sides were poised to announce diplomatic relations and the visit to Tunis of an official Israeli delegation.

The Belgian minister said the EC believed that regional economic cooperation as "conditio sine qua non" to improve the social and economic conditions of the people of the region. And hence, he said, the community "is ready to play an important, active and dynamic role" in the area.

Mr. Claes, who described his visit to Syria and Jordan as aimed at "listening to the opinion" of the leaders of the two countries and convey EC viewpoints to them, said Mr. Assad had assured him of a "neutral" stand vis-à-vis the Israel-PLO accord.

"The Syrian authorities are not all enthusiastic about the agreement," Mr. Claes said. "President Assad assured me

that he will not fight (the accord) but he is not ready to support (it)... he is taking a neutral position."

President Assad, however, reaffirmed his commitment to a negotiated peace settlement with Israel and "insisted on the necessity of accelerating the process as foreseen in Madrid," where an international conference launched Arab-Israeli peace talks in October 1991.

The Syrian leader also ruled out his country's participation in the multilateral phase of the peace process "until he can see clear (progress)" in the bilateral talks, Mr. Claes said.

(A European diplomatic source said meanwhile that the EC was proceeding on the presumption that "there cannot be an Arab-Israeli war without Egypt and Arab-Israeli peace without Syria.")

The Belgian Foreign minister, who last week urged the European Parliament to release of \$188 million in aid to Syria held up over human rights concerns, denied that the community was trying to pressure Damascus into shifting its positions.

"I did not (visit) Syria in order to (apply) pressure," he said. "I was not making any link between European initiatives in the field of economic cooperation... and the peace process."

Mr. Claes said the EC was planning to sign a "treaty of cooperation" with Israel before the end of the year as part of the community's support for economic cooperation in the Middle East. He did not give details, but it is believed that the protocol envisages preferential treatment for Israeli exports to EC member countries in addition to aid to the Jewish state.

Answering a question, Mr. Claes said "some coordination" will have to be made between the multilateral phase of peace talks on regional cooperation and the Oct. 1 donors' conference. But, he said, it is premature to see the shape of such linkage.



ARAFAT IN JAKARTA: Indonesian President Suharto (right) meets with Palestine leader Yasser Arafat shortly before starting their talks at the Merdeka Palace Friday. Mr. Arafat is in Indonesia on a two-day visit to brief President Suharto on the PLO-Israel accord on Palestinian autonomy (AFP photo)

Knesset's 'yes' votes on PLO deal signal a turning point

From Michael Jansen
in Nicosia

ON Thursday, after three days of acrimonious debate, Israel's Knesset approved Israel's recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and adopted the Oslo accord on Palestinian self-government and the agreed agenda for a settlement with Jordan. Sixty-one of the 120 members voted in favour, 50 against, eight abstained and one absented himself.

The parties voting in favour were Labour, 44 votes; Meretz, 12; Hadash 3 and the Arab Democratic party, 2. The MKs voting against were 29 of the Likud's 32, 8 from Tsomet, 3 from Moledet, 6 from the National Religious party and 4 from United Torah Jewry. Three Likud members of Knesset (MKs) and five from Shas abstained and one Shas MK did not appear in the Knesset chamber.

The government of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin also withstood a vote of no-confidence by 61 to 52.

Although the government secured the peacekeeping mandate it required by only a one-vote majority, those 61 votes amounted to a considerable victory for Mr. Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. The vote was a victory not so much because the government secured the majority it expected, but because the opposition could muster only 50 votes, instead of all 59 members, not voting in favour. This means that Mr. Rabin has a comfortable margin of 11 over his opponents. After the vote he stated that the government would now go ahead with "implementation of the agreements" with the PLO and Jordan.

This margin was unexpectedly large because, three members from the Likud party abstained. These were Assad, a Druze MK who voted as his Druze constituents demanded; Ronnie Milo, currently a candidate in the Tel Aviv mayoral race who be-

lieves the majority of Israelis living in this, the country's largest city, support the accords; and Meir Shetreet, who voted his "conscience". Likud hawks asked for the dismissal of the three from the party.

Mr. Shetreet, a Moroccan by origin, was sharply critical of the Likud leadership which he said had "lost the middle ground in Israeli politics." I.e. shifted so far to the right as to lose its portion of voters in the centre. An Israeli commentator told this correspondent last week that the Likud "sounds exactly like the lunatic right."

Instead of offering an alternative to the Oslo accords, Likudniks could only call Mr. Rabin a "traitor" and claim that implementation of Palestinian self-rule would lead to the Jews being driven into the sea. The fact that the Likud has indeed lost touch with the centre has been borne out by opinion polls which register over 67 per cent of Israelis supporting the Rabin-Arafat accord.

debate that the agreement with the PLO would lead to the creation of a Palestinian state but was unable to keep his party in line when it came down to the vote.

"The abstention of the three deputies dealt us a hard blow," former Defence Minister Ariel Sharon told Israeli Radio on Friday. "It allows the government to gain the upper hand with a moral mandate over the population."

"What's most serious is that we prepared for this decisive moment for years. Now that it's here we're unable to explain our position and chart out a coherent strategy," he added.

The vote could be a turning point for Israel. It was a vote for pursuing peace instead of the ongoing war of attrition against the Palestinians in the territories. It was a vote against the "greater Israel" that was the dream of the founding fathers of the Jewish state, a dream the Likud and the religious parties have tried to turn into reality. It is significant that Mr. Rabin and Mr. Peres, who can be counted among Israel's founding fathers, have decided that the dream was unattainable and, by accepting the terms of U.N. resolutions 242 and 338, have committed themselves to exchanging territory for peace.

By enlisting the support of the Hadash and Arab Democratic parties, Rabin broke the taboo against relying in key contests on "Arab" leftist parties which are considered by a majority of Israelis to be "non-Zionist" as they have advocated a compromise with the Palestinians since the founding of Israel. On the eve of the vote Mr. Rabin was accused of exploiting the "PLO vote" but this did not deter him. His reliance on the backing of five leftist MKs at this crucial juncture is indicative of the changing climate of opinion in Israel where the parties traditionally considered "non-Zionist" have suddenly become respectable partners in peacemaking.

ANALYSIS

It was expected that deputies from the Sephardi religious party, Shas, would abstain from the vote: five abstained and one was absent. Until recently Shas was a member of the coalition but the party chairman, Arye Deri, minister of the interior, and two other deputy ministers were dismissed because of allegations of corruption. The party's spiritual mentor, Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, stated last week that Shas would not vote against the accord, in spite of pressure from other ultra-orthodox religious parties to do so. Rabbi Yosef, whose word is obeyed by his followers, has taken the stand that the life of one Jew is not worth continuing the occupation of the occupied territories occupied in 1967.

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu warned during the

Attacks against U.N. mount in Mogadishu

MOGADISHU (AFP) — Somali militiamen stepped up mortar attacks against United Nations forces in Mogadishu early Friday, and a gunman wounded a Pakistani soldier at a checkpoint, a U.N. spokesman said.

Several shells apparently fired at the airport fell harmlessly in the sea, and others slammed into the ground outside the heavily-fortified U.N. compound at the former U.S. embassy, Tim McDavitt said.

Suspected fighters of wanted warlord Mohammed Farah Aided exchanged small arms fire with U.S. soldiers at a base near the embassy and then melted away into the night, Captain McDavitt said.

Pakistani soldiers manning a checkpoint in General Aided's south Mogadishu stronghold came under small

arms fire.

A rocket-propelled grenade and a shell from a 106-mm recoilless rifle ploughed into the sandy ground nearby.

Pakistani soldiers manning another checkpoint shot dead a Somali truck driver after he opened up on them with an AK 47 automatic rifle as they prepared to search his truck, laden with fruit and vegetables.

He wounded a soldier, who was described as being in "stable condition" at the Swedish military hospital here. His life was not in danger.

"There was a lot of activity during the night but it wasn't a coordinated offensive," Capt. McDavitt said.

But he stressed that U.N. forces were "taking very seriously" threats of major attacks against them in retaliation for the capture this week of

Gen. Aided's right-hand man Osman Hassan Ali, known as "Ato," the thin man.

He said American aid workers and a reporter had been taken to the U.N. compound here overnight because of "threats of hostage-taking, particularly Americans."

"We're taking prudent measures," Capt. McDavitt said.

U.S. Ambassador Robert Gosende said gunmen suspected to be Aided militiamen had twice gone to aid agency offices and asked for Americans by name in the past three days.

In both cases the Americans were out of their offices.

Mr. Gosende said militiamen had captured two Italians 13 days ago and had held them for five hours.

They were freed only after they managed to convince their captors that they were not

American, Mr. Gosende told reporters.

Aided militiamen are holding a Nigerian soldier captured on Sept. 6.

"We believe he is alive," said U.N. political spokesman Farouk Mawlawi.

Speculation mounted that Gen. Aided's Somali National Alliance would offer to exchange Mr. Osman Ali for the Nigerian but U.N. sources said the world body would refuse.

Gen. Aided is wanted for the June 5 killings of 24 Pakistani peacekeepers.

The bloody conflict between U.N. forces and the elusive warlord, still in hiding here, has killed hundreds of Somalis including many women and children, and 53 U.N. soldiers since the world body took over the Somalia operation from the United States on May 4.

Most Palestinians back Israel-PLO accord — poll

AMMAN (J.T.) — More than two thirds of Palestinians in the occupied territories support the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreement giving them interim self-rule, according to an opinion poll conducted recently.

The survey of 1,505 Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip conducted by the Jerusalem Media and Communications Centre (JMCC) and sponsored by CNN and France 2 television also showed that support for Islamic groups opposed to the agreement was waning.

The poll showed that 68.6 per cent said they agreed with the Sept. 13 accord only 27.8 per cent opposed the deal and 3.6 per cent gave a different answer.

According to the poll, the accord was more popular in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho — where Palestinians would initially have greater autonomy than in the rest of the occupied territories.

It said 72 per cent of Gazans and 83.2 per cent of Jericho residents backed the deal.

The poll also showed that 64.4 per cent of the respondents had more confidence in the PLO-led nationalist camp compared to 17.5 per cent who put their faith in Islamic groups.

An opinion poll conducted by the JMCC last month showed that 50.9 per cent said they trusted PLO-led nationalists compared to 24.1 per cent who said they trusted Islamic groups, while 23.9 per cent backed other groups.

The sample included 920 West Bankers including (Jerusalem) and 585 Gazans.

Asked if the agreement added legitimacy to the Israeli occupation, 37.5 per cent said yes, 54.6 said no and 7.9 were not decided — 68.1 per cent viewed the agreement as a means for saving them from the difficult living conditions while 24.2 per cent saw otherwise.

Asked whether the agreement will lead to internal Palestinian strife, 26.2 per cent said yes, 60.8 per cent said no while 12.3 were not decided.

Asked whether the Palestinian leadership will be able to

run the Palestinian affairs in the interim period, 26.2 per cent said yes and 64.2 said no.

Asked whether they support the continuation of negotiations with Israel, 72.9 per cent said yes, 25 per cent said no, while 2.1 were not decided.

Asked which party can save them from the status quo, 64.4 per cent said the nationalist forces (the PLO), and 17.5 said-Islamic forces while 18.1 per cent saw otherwise.

On the impact of the PLO-Israeli agreement on the Palestinian people's positions, 46.5 per cent said their support for the PLO had increased, 19.1 said their support for and confidence in the PLO had diminished, and 24.6 per cent said the agreement had no impact on their confidence and support for the PLO while 9.8 per cent said they had no opinion.

The Gaza Strip, 72 per cent of the sample surveyed voiced their support for the Palestinian-Israeli agreement as opposed to 66.4 per cent in the occupied West Bank.

— 64.2 of the Gazans co-

vered by the poll saw the agreement as a practical step to establish a Palestinian state while 57.6 of the West Bankers shared this view.

— 29.5 of the Gazans said the agreement legitimises the Israeli occupation compared with 42.6 per cent in the West Bank.

— 74.7 per cent of the Gazans and 64 per cent of the West Bankers said the agreement was a means to save them from the difficult conditions.

On the possibility of Palestinian strife, 16.8 per cent of the Gazans and 33.2 of the West Bankers said the agreement will lead to internal fighting.

In Gaza 17.6 per cent, as opposed to 31.6 per cent in the West Bank, said the Palestinian leadership will be able to run the Palestinian affairs in the interim rule period.

— 75.9 per cent of the Gazans and 71 per cent of the West Bankers supported the resumption of Palestinian-Israeli negotiations.

Asked which party is most able to save them from the status quo, 70.1 of the Gazans

and 60.7 of the West Bankers said the PLO, while 18.1 per cent in Gaza and 17.1 in the West Bank said Islamic forces.

In Gaza, 52.8 per cent said their support for and confidence in the PLO had increased as compared to 42.4 per cent of the West Bankers.

— 15 per cent of the Gazans and 21.8 per cent of the West Bankers said their support for and confidence in the PLO had diminished while 22.5 per cent and 25.9 per cent in Gaza and the West Bank respectively said the agreement had no impact on their position towards the PLO.

In Jericho, the poll found that 83.2 per cent of the sample surveyed were in favour of the agreement and that 79.8 per cent saw the agreement as a practical step to establish a Palestinian state.

— 28.7 per cent said the agreement legitimises the Israeli occupation while 67 per cent saw otherwise.

— 84 per cent saw the agreement as a means for saving them from their difficult living

conditions, and 23.2 said it will lead to internal strife and fighting while 73.7 said it will not lead to violence.

On the ability of the PLO to run the Palestinian affairs in the interim stage, 21.3 per cent said the PLO can run Palestinian affairs while 73.4 per cent saw otherwise.

— 85.3 per cent supported the resumption of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, while 18.6 per cent rejected it.

— 79.3 per cent said the PLO was the most capable power of saving them from their current situations while 6.5 per cent said Islamic forces were the most qualified to do that.

On the impact of the agreement on their positions on the PLO, 64.1 per cent said their support for and confidence in the PLO had increased while 9.8 per cent said their support and confidence had diminished. However, 18.5 per cent said the agreement has no impact on their support for and confidence in the organisation.

16 killed in Kabul battles

KABUL (R) — Fierce rocket exchanges between rival Shiite and Sunni Muslim factions in the Afghan capital Kabul have killed 16 people and injured 55, hospitals and officials said Thursday.

The clashes, the bloodiest for several weeks, erupted late Wednesday in the western suburbs — already reduced to rubble in many parts by months of similar bombardments — and raged into Thursday morning, doctors said.

Each side accused the other of starting the fighting, the most serious violation of a ceasefire agreed last month between the Iran-backed Shiite Hezb-e-Wahdat party and the extremist Saudi-backed Sunni Ittehad-e-Islami group.

Ittehad leader Abdul Rab Sayyaf told Reuters the fighting was the most serious of three recent ceasefire violations.

He said 12 people were killed in rocket and mortar fire on the Shiite Kampari settlement on the road to his base at Paghman, a former resort town in hills about 25 kilometres west of Kabul.

COLUMN

Clinton gets wrong speech in mixup

WASHINGTON (R) — A teleprompter mixup left President Bill Clinton nearly speechless. As he faced millions of Americans to deliver the address of his political life on health care reform and applause coursed through the House of Representatives chamber, a surprised Clinton saw the teleprompter display his Feb. 17 State of the Union Address. "Wrong speech," the president whispered to Vice President Al Gore, who was standing behind him. Mr. Gore promptly informed senior Clinton adviser George Stephanopoulos, "who at that point had no blood in his body," according to White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers. Mr. Clinton went ahead and began his speech, reading from the written text before him, and White House aides scrambled to fix the problem. Top communications aide David Dreyer pulled the computer file from the teleprompter and found that yes, Mr. Clinton's health care speech was on the file, but that the State of the Union Address was on it too. The mixup had occurred, said Ms. Myers, because Mr. Clinton was still tinkering with the wording of his speech until the last possible moment — during the short limousine ride from the White House to Capitol Hill. Aides made the changes in the teleprompter, file, and the confusion of the State of the Union Address was put forward for Mr. Clinton to read. The mixup took about six minutes to fix.

Yeltsin congratulates reindeer breeders

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent his greetings to the World Festival of Reindeer Breeders, which opened in Norway Friday, saying Russia backed this "noble movement" strongly. ITAR-TASS News Agency said, Russia was represented at the festival, organised under the international year of indigenous peoples, by reindeer breeders from 14 areas of northern Russia, Siberia and the Far East, the report said.

Michael Jackson concert draws 50,000 Turks

ISTANBUL (R) — More than 50,000 Turks, roaring, dancing and waving candles, turned out for a concert by pop superstar Michael Jackson in Istanbul Thursday night. Jackson, who flew into Istanbul from Israel Wednesday, is expected to leave Turkey Saturday.

Tokyo Film Festival opens

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's fledgling film festival opened Friday with a screening of Sylvester Stallone's new thriller, *Cliffhanger*. The film's director, Renny Harlin, was among a handful of guests to open the 6th Tokyo International Film Festival. Harlin's other credits include *Die Hard*. Organisers say they hope the festival, which became an annual event last year, will become an internationally acclaimed event, but few expect it ever to rival its more prestigious counterparts in Cannes or Venice. German director Wim Wenders, whose films include *Wings of Desire* and *Paris, Texas*, will chair the jury for the young cinema competition, which will distribute three prizes worth a total of 35 million yen (\$333,000). Entries include two American films, *Menace II Society* by Allen and Albert Hughes and *Kalifornia* by Dominic Sena. Italian director Franco Zeffirelli will chair the jury for the international competition, which does not carry a cash prize. Entries include *Silent Tongue*, the second film to be directed by actor Sam Shepard, and *Younger And Younger* starring Donald Sutherland.

China holds first rare book auction

PEKING (AP) — Old Peking Opera records and books dating back 1,400 years were among the items auctioned at the first Peking rare book auction, the China Daily reported Friday. The highest bid at Thursday's auction was 120,000 yuan (\$21,000) for a hand-painted book published around 1800, the newspaper reported. Sales of 112 of the 240 books and opera recordings offered brought in 379,000 yuan (\$68,000).